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50th Anniversary Rolex 24 at Daytona January 28 – 29, 2012

Team Race Report Compilation

Photos by Andrew S. Hartwell – ashautomobilia.com



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Michael Shank Racing with Curb/Agajanian Wins 50th Rolex 24 At Daytona Double-podium finish in GRAND-AM's Biggest-Ever Event

Provided by Matt Cleary – Michael Shank Racing

With the world watching, Michael Shank Racing with Curb/Agajanian made history as the team won the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona to open the 2012 GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series season. John Pew, Ozz Negri, AJ Allmendinger, and Justin Wilson drove the No. 60 LiveOn Ford-Riley to a 5.198-second victory after completing a DP-era record 761 laps at Daytona International Speedway.

Bolstering the storybook victory was the strong finish of the team's sister No. 6 Ford-Riley DPG2 entry, which finished third with Michael McDowell, Felipe Nasr, Jorge Goncalvez, and Gustavo Yacaman fighting back from two laps down to finish less than one minute behind the winning car after 24 hours of racing.

From the huge assembly of previous winning cars and drivers on hand, the biggest crowd in the event's history, the debut of the new Daytona Prototype machines, a huge GT Class field, Sir Jackie Stewart calling the race start, and another Rolex 24 field deep with international talent, the race held high expectations. And with 49 lead changes among 53 drivers, a record race distance covered, and a battle that ran at an unrelenting pace right to the finish, the event fully lived up to those expectations as Michael Shank Racing with Curb/Agajanian won the race for the first time in team history.

"It's just indescribable," said Team Owner Mike Shank about the hugely popular win. "I don't know what to say, I'm just so happy to be here - just thankful for the guys that do all the work for us, that hung in with us for those years and it all paid off today. 50th anniversary - it doesn't happen but once. I always feel like I have to prove myself every step because I came from nothing more or less, and it's because I've had great relationships with people like Ozz and John Pew that have really taken our business to another level."

Ozz Negri qualified the Michael Shank Racing with Curb/Agajanian No. 60 Liveon.com entry sixth on the grid and the Ford-powered Daytona Prototype dominated most of the race running in the top-three throughout the majority of the event. The team led a total of 249 laps with Wilson pacing the field for 92, Allmendinger for 90 and Negri for 67. Allmendinger has led laps in each of his seven Rolex 24 starts with Michael Shank Racing.

McDowell put the No. 6 Michael Shank Racing with Curb/Agajanian entry eighth on the grid and the squad immediately set a strong pace - running in the top-five throughout much of the event. Despite the significant youth of the line-up, all four drivers looked more like veterans, pacing lap after lap with strong times while staying out of trouble through the frantic race start, long night, and endless GT traffic. Falling two laps down after completing the needed brake updates through the running, the team used shrewd strategy from the pit box and great pace from the drivers to be on the lead lap for the closing stages of the race.

Both Michael Shank Racing with Curb/Agajanian cars ran a near perfect race with each entry leading laps and never going behind the wall for repairs as the Shank squad's elaborate preparation for the historic event paid off in a big way. The race was the ninth outing in the fabled Rolex 24 At Daytona for the team, and the huge result was one that left fans, media, and even some of the competition roundly pleased as the team broke through on the biggest stage yet.

Ozz Negri, No. 60 Liveon.com Ford-Riley: "It's a cool way to start the year, man. A very cool way to start the year. You know, being with Mike for such a long time, what makes it special is that he wants to win as bad as I do. It's just so cool, also, to have a fiery AJ, a very calm and fast Wilson, and John Pew on the team. I think we had a dream team this year.

It's the best place to start, right? We've got to keep working, keep working hard throughout the year and take every race at a time. We did our homework for this race. We talked a lot about how we wanted the car for the race, and we made it happen. We as a group, we will be working pretty hard this year."

John Pew, No. 60 Liveon.com Ford-Riley: "It means a lot to me. Dealing with Mike since 2006, I think it was 2006, he's a great guy to deal with on a business level, personal level, and as a race team owner. He's a straight shooter. He wears his emotions on his sleeve, which I like. There's no second-guessing, and he says what he says and he means what he says, and I really like that.

He's taken this team a long way since I first started with this team, and he wants to do things right and he wants to win. He's very competitive, and I really love that. He puts pressure on me, too, which I really like. I've got to be fast, or he's not going to let me stay in the car much. So I've got to really work on it, and I like it that way. I don't want to just go out there and drive laps for the hell of it.

I feel really lucky to drive with these guys, AJ, Justin and Ozz. I've known for a while. These guys are great people and they're fantastic driver, some of the best in the world, and I learn a lot from them. I get to look at their data on their race car and see what all their speed secrets are, and they're free to share it. It's been a really great experience.

And Ozz has been a great co-driver for the last few years and a great coach. And when we're not at the racetrack, we're at the go-kart track and he's showing me things there. We work really hard at it and we take it really seriously and I appreciate the seriousness that he takes it."

A.J. Allmendinger, No. 60 Liveon.com Ford-Riley: "The last seven years this whole team, Mike Shank Racing, went through a lot to get to this point, and it's really cool not only to win the race but to have two cars on the podium, to have really all the guys that have worked really hard. It's the same group of guys that I've seen for the last seven years, Oswaldo can attest to that and Justin can attest to that, that it's a small group of guys that Mike puts together, and they work their butts off, and it's really cool this year to have them get a well-deserved victory and a second car on the podium. I feel very fortunate. This is one of the reasons why I love this race, because it really kicks off Speed Weeks. It's such a prestigious race. It's one of those races you want on your résumé and you want to say that you were part of a victory.

Mike did a good job. He changed the driver lineup, said I was going to be in the car last, and gave me seven, eight hours to rest while Ozz and Justin had to do all the work in the middle of the night into the morning. I knew that every lap I had to just drive my butt off, every single lap. And I honestly feel like -- I never try to give myself a ton of credit, but I feel like that's some of the best three hours of driving I've ever done in my life, just every lap, whether it was being aggressive, whether it was trying to dodge GT traffic, I felt like that might be some of the best three hours of driving I've ever had in my life."

Justin Wilson, No. 60 Liveon.com Ford-Riley: "Hopefully this is the start of a good season. You know, we were joking about that before the race, win this one and move on, win St. Pete, and who knows, maybe the 500. We've just got to take it one step at a time. I think we've got a good opportunity this year with Dale Coyne Racing and with the Honda engine. I think we do our homework and we do some good testing, we'll be in with a shout once we can still compete with the Ganassi guys.

We just have to work it out. I think it's going to be an exciting year. I'm really looking forward to it. This is a great opportunity and a chance to really build something, and hopefully win a few more races.

It's just a different driving style, and the cool thing is you're challenging yourself trying to work that out, trying to pick those up and use everything that you've learnt and possibly know about driving in this one race. Whether it's positioning yourself through traffic or dealing with the car when it gets loose and trying not to lose too much time, there's just lots of little things that are constantly happening. In these cars, they're so sensitive, if you downshift a fraction too late, the weight of the car is going to take over and you're not going to make the corner. You've got to be on your game the entire time."

Michael McDowell, No. 6 Ford-Riley: "What's cool about my situation is this is really where I started my professional career was in GRAND-AM. I was in the Rolex Series for two years prior to moving over to stock car. So my transition is actually kind of backwards from what most guys do. They have a good successful career in NASCAR and then come over and race GRAND-AM. What I love about it is I grew up road racing, loved open wheel, loved sports car, and just the cool places, cool venues we get to go to and great racetracks. The thing that keeps you coming back to this event is you don't have a watch yet. It's what keeps bringing you back. But it's a great event, and it's become really an all-star race with just great drivers from every series and world.

I felt like the old man in the group. But it was just great. These guys not having a lot of experience in endurance cars doesn't make them any less capable of running well and having patience and doing the things that we did in this race. More it was just running through scenarios and just telling them how to prepare for the GT traffic and just walk through it."

Jorge Goncalvez, No. 6 Ford-Riley: "Short racing in Indy Lights, and right here you have a little bit of pressure because you have the whole team pushing you, so you have to be fast and give the car to the other guys and don't crash. So I think we all did a really good job. Nobody crashed the cars and then it go to the guys. That's why we are on the podium, I think."

Felipe Nasr, No. 6 Ford-Riley: "It's been great. I'm surprised to be here with these guys right here. I think we all did a good job. For my first ever time doing a 24, I'm surprised, I need to say. It was an unbelievable experience for me, and I just can't wait to come back here in the next years."

Gustavo Yacaman, No. 6 Ford-Riley: "It's a long race and a lot of complicated things happened. They had a lot of problems. We had a flawless race. Michael Shank did an amazing job preparing, getting ready both of the cars. We had no mechanical failures. We had no driver mistakes. Ozz Negri was, as well. He guided me through the team and everything. I really want to thank them, too, because thanks to them, I think we had the result that we had today, especially Ozz. Obviously we had more contact and more time together, explain how the car works, explaining situations.

You know, I had probably 1,000 questions to ask Mike before the race started, and he answered them all in one email. It was a seven-page email, but he answered them all. Everything was really clear. I think we were all -- I wasn't nervous at the beginning of the race. I knew what I had to do. I knew in case of emergency what we needed to do. If I had a flat tire, I knew exactly what we needed to do if I had a flat tire. I think it's preparation and being cool-headed, and also, you know, a little bit of luck. At the end of the day, it's 24 hours, and a lot of things can happen, and you need to have some luck."

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GRAND-AM Race Report

Michael Shank Racing Captures 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona

Magnus Racing brings home GT class victory

Provided by DIS Communications

On his ninth attempt, team owner Michael Shank finally captured America's most prestigious sports car race – the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona.

The team of Oswaldo Negri, John Pew, AJ Allmendinger and Justin Wilson in the No. 60 Michael Shank Racing with Curb-Agajanian Ford Riley survived a tight battle for the lead in the final hours to take home the grueling twice-around-the-clock challenge by a 5.198-second margin of victory.

"I feel like we deserved it to be honest," Shank said. "I think we've worked hard. I don't make any excuses for that. We paid our dues for sure and I hope it can take us to new cool places in the coming years."

The winning No. 60 car had an average speed of 126.300 mph and turned 761 laps, 2709.16 miles, nearly equivalent of a trip from Daytona Beach, Fla., to Los Gatos, Calif., Allmendinger's hometown.

The number of laps completed by the winning Shank team was one lap shy of the Rolex 24 all-time record set back in 1992.

Allmendinger, who recently signed with Roger Penske in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series, drove the final stint in the No. 60 car. It was Allmendinger's seventh time racing with Shank in the Rolex 24.

"I feel very fortunate," Allmendinger said. "This is one of the reasons why I love this race, because it really kicks off Speedweeks. It's such a prestigious race. It's one of those races you want on your resume and you want to say that you were part of a victory. It's amazing. I'm going to cherish this."

Said Negri: "It's a cool way to start the year. Being with Mike for such a long time, what makes it special is that he wants to win as bad as I do. It's just so cool. To have a fiery AJ, a very calm and fast Wilson and John Pew on the team, I think we had a dream team this year."

Finishing behind the No. 60 car was the pole-winning No. 8 Starworks Motorsport Ford Riley and Ryan Dalziel, Alex Popow, Lucas Luhr, Allan McNish and Enzo Potolicchio.

Shank Racing took the final spot on the podium with the No. 6 Ford Riley with Michael McDowell, Jorge Goncalvez, Gustavo Yacaman and Sunoco Rolex 24 At Daytona Driver Challenge winner Felipe Nasr.

In the competitive GT class, the No. 44 Magnus Racing Porsche with team owner John Potter, Andy Lally, Richard Lietz and Rene Rast were victorious.

It was not only the team's first Rolex 24 victory but their first Rolex Series triumph.

"I absolutely knew that we had the potential to do it," Lally said. "The people that were assembled by John to start Magnus Racing just two years ago were top-notch guys, and he took direction from some really well seasoned vets, and he steered the ship in the right direction and basically put together a really solid, strong effort."

With just under two hours remaining, Lally, behind the wheel of the No. 44 Porsche, slipped past Leh Keen in the No. 59 Brumos Racing Porsche to take the lead for the final time.

"The Brumos car was really strong," said Lally, who earned 2011 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Rookie of the Year honors. "There were lot of really strong race cars out there, and we were a little bit off sequence. I think I had a little bit fresher tires than he did, so I was able to get a little better run out of the bus stop there. The draft here is so huge that I was able to come up alongside. We were really, really close."

The 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona featured the return of 29 past winning Rolex 24 overall winning cars as well as 47 former champions with over half of them competing in the race. [Back To Top](#)



FORD Racing Report

Ford Sweeps Podium of 50th Running of Rolex 24

Provided by Mike Boseak - FORD Racing North America

- The Ford-powered programs of Michael Shank Racing (1st, 3rd) and Starworks Motorsport (2nd) swept the podium of the 50th Rolex 24 at Daytona International Speedway on Sunday to open the 2012 season of the Grand-Am Rolex series.
- The No. 60 of MSR took first and the No. 6 third, while the Starworks No. 8 placed second after starting on the pole.
- Ford last swept the podium in 1966, its first victory in the 24-hour version of the event.

Historic events are often filled with special moments, and the 50th anniversary of the Rolex 24 was no exception. Ford powered cars managed to sweep the podium of North America's greatest endurance test at Daytona International Speedway on Sunday to kick off the 2012 season of the Grand-Am Rolex series.

Michael Shank Racing's No. 60 Daytona Prototype claimed the checkered flag, followed by Starworks Motorsport's No. 8 DP and the MSR No. 6 DP, giving the Blue Oval its first DP victory at Daytona since 2003, and its first overall victory in the 24-hour marathon event since 1999.

"I always feel like I have to prove myself, because I came from nothing," Michael Shank said. "I've had great relationships with people like Ozz Negri and John Pew that have taken our business to another level."

A.J. Allmendinger piloted across the finish line seconds ahead of pole winner Ryan Dalziel, and Filipe Nasr soon followed to complete the impressive feat.

"That Ford motor was the best, most powerful engine I've ever had," Allmendinger said, noting that when anyone challenged him during that final three-hour period, "the engine pulled like no other I've ever had. It was great."

Ford also swept the podium in 1966, one of four victories for the manufacturer in the 24-hour version of the race, which includes three overall victories -- 1966, 1997 and 1999.

"What a historic moment for all of Ford Motor Company and its fans around the world," Jamie Allison, director, Ford Racing, said. "In the hands of our long-time partners at Michael Shank Racing and our new friends at Starworks Motorsport, we are proud to have captured this special 1-2-3 finish at the 50th running of the iconic Rolex 24 at Daytona. Without so many people, a moment like this would never be possible. The support from

Roush Yates, who support all of our teams in Grand-Am, under the leadership of John Maddux and Doug Yates is critical to our success."

The accomplishments of the weekend were also special for John Maddux of Roush Yates engines.

"We've had some really fast cars in the past, but we've never had it come together," Maddux said. "We had two really strong teams and they put it all together there today. A huge thanks to Robert and Doug Yates and Jack Roush for believing in the fact that we could make a commercial business out of sports car racing. It's been great."

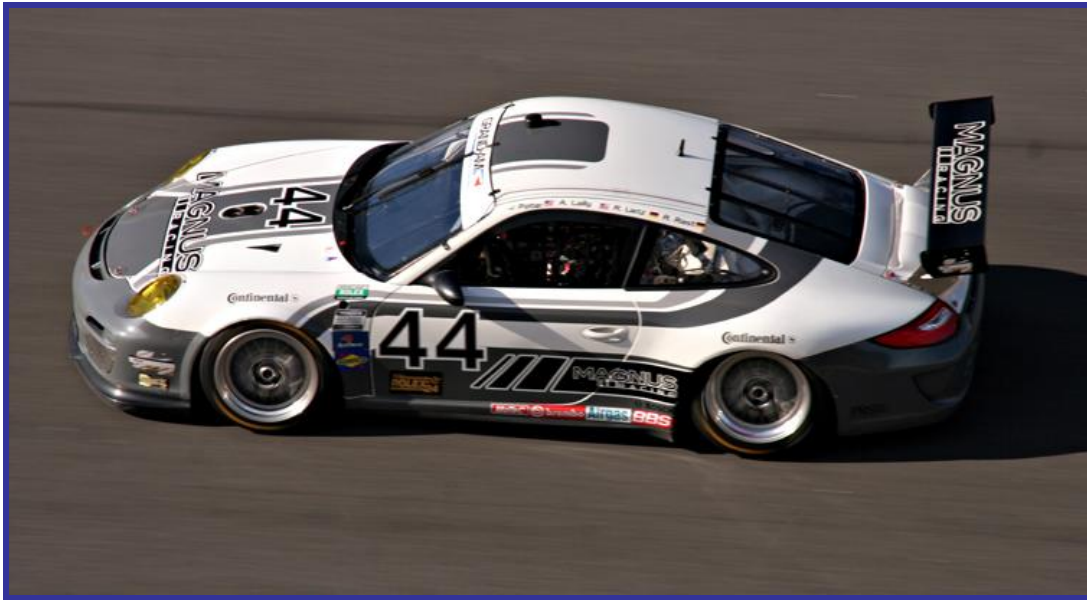
Each of the three Ford teams on the podium led at least one lap, including a race-best 295 by the No. 8 and 249 by the No. 60. The three teams combined to pace 545 of the 761 completed laps.

"A grueling 24-hour race is a culmination of team work, perseverance and flawless execution, and that came at the hands of all 12 of our Ford drivers," said Allison.

The No. 60 DP, piloted by Allmendinger, Ozz Negri, John Pew and Justin Wilson, and the No. 8 DP, manned by Dalziel, Lucas Luhr, Allan McNish, Alex Popow and Enzo Potolicchio, each showed long stints of dominance at various points in the race, and the crew of the No. 6 DP, driven by Jorge Goncalvez, Michael McDowell, Felipe Nasr, and Gustavo Yacaman, made critical strides to come back from a lap down in the late stages of the event. Winning the Rolex 24 is a special victory, but claiming the checkered flag on the 50th anniversary of the event makes it a moment many will never forget.

"Being there for the weekend festivities to celebrate the history of this marquee event, with the leadership of Jim France and his team in Grand-Am, make this victory even sweeter," Allison said.

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Magnus Racing Leads Porsche 911 GT3 Cup Sweep of Rolex 24 Podium Providedby Porsche Motorsports

Richard Lietz (Austria), sharing the #44 Magnus Porsche 911 GT3 Cup with John Potter/Andy Lally/Rene Rast, took over the driving duties with less than two hours left to go at the 50th Rolex 24 at Daytona. He then guided his car through two pit stops and to the GT victory for the Salt Lake City-based team owned by Potter and led a sweep of the GT podium by Porsche 911 race cars.

In fact, with Lietz, Henzler and Lieb “all Porsche factory drivers - driving their cars to the checkered flag, Porsche Motorsport North America president Jens Walther is especially proud of the Porsche people, not just the race cars.

“With both our customer race car owners and our factory drivers, we have the best people in the motorsports business associated with Porsche, and they are a key part in making our street cars and race cars great,” said Walther, who has been president of Porsche Motorsport North America, Inc. since 2010.

Winning team owner John Potter could not contain his feelings in the pit box after the checkered flag dropped, as his team was victorious in one of the greatest sports car races in the world after being in existence less than three years.

“This crew works so hard, and we have come so close to the top step of the podium in Grand-Am in the past, but to win for the first time, at this race is something special. Rene and Andy are great guys, and Richard really brought us home strong,” said Potter.

Lietz was pleased that Potter chose him to finish the race, and he thought the field of drivers was especially strong.

“I was honored to carry the team flag to the finish line, and we bested a field of world-class GT drivers,” said Lietz.

For Rene Rast (Germany), the defending Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup champion, it was his first time at Daytona, but the significance of the victory did not escape him.

“To finish at the top with perhaps the greatest GT field ever is an honor, and I thank Porsche and Magnus Racing for allowing me to be involved,” said Rast.

Andy Lally (USA) won this GT event last year, but switched teams this year to join Magnus Racing.

"This was a great victory for John Potter and Magnus, but it is only the first step in our quest for the Rolex Grand-Am GT championship and North American Endurance GT Championship," said Lally, who will run with Potter for the entire Grand-Am season in their Porsche 911 GT3 Cup.

Finishing the Porsche sweep of the podium is the second-place TRG Porsche of Steve Bertheau/Marc Goosens/Wolf Henzler/Spencer Pumpelly/Jeroen Bleekemolen, and the #59 Brumos Porsche (Leh Keen/Hurley Haywood/Andrew Davis/Marc Lieb) was third. Both teams led for substantial lengths of time during the 24-hour event, but, in the end, both the cars couldn't catch the Magnus Porsche.

"We ran the whole event flat out, and spent hours and hours in the lead, but we had some front-end body damage that hurt our aerodynamics, and an extra pit stop in the end brought us up a little bit short. Still, we are proud of our Brumos drivers and crew, and we won the GT championship last year after finishing fifth, so we will proceed on that mission again," said Hurley Haywood, five-time Daytona overall winner and current Brumos team manager.

For Porsche factory driver Wolf Henzler (Germany), qualifying woes put their TRG Porsche near the back of the field for the start of the race, but they also led for multiple hours before clutch woes slowed them down near the end.

"My Porsche colleague Richard Lietz is very fast, and we could not make up any time on the Magnus car in the end. But we are happy with our second-place finish, and the TRG crew prepared a Porsche which performed great all race," said Henzler, who won the GT class at Le Mans in 2010.

Alex Job Racing's WeatherTech Porsche was hit by a prototype, ruining its suspension and other parts "causing a long pit stop and a 17th place finish. Similarly, Flying Lizard Motorsports Porsche lost its power steering (preceded accident during the night), which put another pre-race favorite at the 15th finishing position.

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at Daytona can be found at
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Corvette DP Debuts with a 5th-Place Finish at 50th Rolex 24 Action Express Racing Bounces Back From Difficult Start

Provided by Team Chevy and prepared by Judy Kouba Dominick and Jim Brumfield

The No. 5 Action Express Racing Corvette Daytona Prototype overcame a number of difficulties – including not being able to make a qualifying run and having to pit after just one lap of the race – to turn in the top performance for Chevrolet in the 50th Rolex 24 Hours at Daytona.

“That was probably one of the toughest 24 Hours I have done,” Darren Law said following a fifth-place finish in the famed endurance race at Daytona International Speedway. “We had a lot of adversity. We had some engine issues prior to the race, (and) we had to miss qualifying. The first, probably, eight hours of the race, we had an electrical misfire, which really cut the motor back, and we struggled.

“But the guys worked really hard – Action Express, Chevrolet, Corvette – they all did a great job. I’m proud of the car. I’m proud of the team. ... A top-five is a good start to the season, and we are happy to finish it.”

The Corvette Daytona Prototype was unveiled in November.

“There is so much potential in this car,” said Law, who shared driving duties with David Donohue and Christian Fittipaldi. “We literally got this car delivered to us the first of December, so we barely had any time on it. For us to be in the top five and run as well as we did, we see a lot of potential.”

The No. 99 GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing entry had the distinction of being the first Corvette Daytona Prototype to lead a lap when Alex Gurney drove to the front late in the first hour.

“We’re pretty happy,” Gurney said following his first stint. “At the very beginning of the race, you’re always focused on not hitting anything and making sure no one does anything crazy on the start, and (I) was happy about that. ... I didn’t have any close calls. A good start for the new Corvette.”

Gurney’s father, Dan, won the inaugural series race at Daytona in 1962.

The GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing Corvette DP, also driven by Jon Fogarty and Memo Gidley, did lead 19 laps but experienced a number of issues and finished 13th in the Daytona Prototype (DP) class.

The No. 90 Spirit of Daytona Corvette DP – driven by Antonio Garcia, Richard Westbrook, Oliver Gavin and Jan Magnussen – ended up in eighth place.

The No. 9 Action Express Racing Corvette DP – driven by Terry Borcheller, JC France, Joao Barbosa and Max Papis – went to the garage at about the 14-hour mark to address a number of issues, and finished ninth.

The No. 10 SunTrust Corvette DP started on the outside of the front row, courtesy of Max Angelelli's qualifying effort, but experienced suspected valve train failure after just 14 laps.

"It's really disappointing, but at the same time this is what happens in this game," owner Wayne Taylor said. "We've never had an engine problem in all the time we've run the Chevrolet engine program, so this is the first time. There was truly nothing we were worried about."

Ricky Taylor, one of the team's four drivers and Wayne Taylor's son, never even got the opportunity to get in the car, which was pulled after 14 laps.

"It's such a big build up for [the Rolex 24] and it is the 50th anniversary," Ricky Taylor said. "With our new car, there is a lot of excitement. The guys gave done so much work at the shop, (they) put in numerous 12- to-18-hour days. It is really tough. Now we have over a month until our next race. I know we'll come back at Barber (Motorsports Park) and redeem ourselves."

Ryan Briscoe also was scheduled to drive the No. 10.

The No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports Camaro GT.R paced Chevrolet with a fourth-place-in-class finish in the Grand Touring (GT) class. John Edwards, who was in the car at the end, said it was a very good way to start the season.

"Absolutely, especially with the endurance championship that's going on later in the year," Edwards said. "We got some good points, but it's always hard to go through a 24-hour race, be chasing down a podium (finish), but not quite get it."

Robin Liddell and Robbie Bremer also drove the No. 57.

Jordan Taylor picked up two spots in the closing laps to secure a ninth-in-class finish for the No. 88 Autohaus Motorsports Camaro GT.R, which was also driven by Paul Edwards, Matthew Marsh and Tom Milner.

The No. 75 Stevenson Motorsports Camaro GT.R – driven by Al Carter, Hugh Plumb, Matt Bell, and Eric Curran – finished 30th in class. The No. 46 Michael Baughman Racing Corvette (Michael Baughman, Mike Yeakle and Ray Mason) finished 40th in class.

Chevrolet will next compete in Grand-Am Road Racing when the season kicks into full-swing with the second event set for March 30-31, 2012 at Barber Motorsports Park, Birmingham, Ala.

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GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing “Red Dragon” races through several setbacks for 13th place finish at Rolex 24

Opening hour lead gives way to a string of issues despite quick new Corvette DP

Provided by Adam Saal – GAINSCO Racing

GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing, and its trio of drivers Alex Gurney, Jon Fogarty and Memo Gidley, saw an opening hour of race-leading success give way to a slew of endurance race related issues that ultimately resulted in a 13th place finish for the two-time championship winning team in the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona, January 28 and 29.

Starting fourth after GAINSCO's best qualifying effort at the Rolex 24 since winning the pole in 2007, opening driver Gurney raced in the lead pack from the drop of the green flag. He brought GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing into the record books later in the race's opening hour when he put the No. 99 “Red Dragon” into the race lead. It marked the first time one of Chevrolet's all-new Corvette Daytona Prototypes to lead a race lap in GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series competition. Gidley would later match the feat when he took over for Gidley in hour two of the race, and it appeared as if GAINSCO was on the early fast track for possible success in the Golden Anniversary edition of America's premier 24-hour race.

The course of any sports car endurance race is seldom smooth and the first in a string of setbacks that combined to keep GAINSCO out of victory lane emerged in the race's seventh hour. An overheating problem led the team to discover and quickly replace a debris-punctured radiator in just over 10 minutes, losing only four race laps.

That was nothing, however, compared to what was behind another heat spike problem in the early overnight hours. The No. 99's temperature suddenly skyrocketed as Gidley was coming in for a pit stop. The problem was traced to a water pump pulley failure and the related thrown belt that forced the team to the garage for the race's next two hours. Any shot at victory, or even a top-five finish, in the 50th Rolex 24 At Daytona was lost.

“It was definitely a very tough day, not what we wanted at all,” Gurney said. “A 13th place showing doesn't seem right for how hard all the guys worked. They toughed it out, but that is the way it is in racing sometimes. There were a few positives as we led the race a little bit and we were fast at times. We just had a few little issues and that's all it takes here to get knocked backed a lot.”

The team's third and final setback came at 6:30 a.m. Sunday when the coldest temperatures of the race forced Gurney off the track and into the tire barrier in the East Horseshoe just after he exited the pits on cold tires. Quicker pit work by the GAINSCO crew got the No. 99 “Red Dragon” back on track, but it was difficult to make up any positions in the race's final nine hours.

“Absolutely, I'm super proud of the guys,” Fogarty said. “The car actually ran flawlessly relative to everything that the GAINSCO crew touched when we had our issues. The water pump deal is just one of those issues in a race like this. It is just a component of the car that had nothing to do with the GAINSCO team's prep, and that's

the way it goes sometimes with a 24-hour race. It tests every bit of the car and every mechanical piece, and this one gave up on us. That's just how it goes."

Despite the tough day, the entire team was encouraged by the performance and potential of its new Corvette Daytona Prototype. The No. 99 turned the third fastest race lap as the top Chevrolet-powered DP in the field, trailing only the first and second place Daytona Prototype finishers.

"Issues aside, the car ran like a clock and we're really happy about that," Fogarty said. "Our pace, relative to the leaders, and compared to our previous visits here, was probably as good as it has ever been. We still have some work to do, but we are close and on top of that. We were the class of the field when it compares to the performance of the new Corvette DPs."

Fogarty had further high praise for the GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing crew.

"I'm proud of the work the team did, not just this weekend, but the last few months," Fogarty said. "The guys put in a lot of work since receiving the car in December. Not where we wanted to finish, but I see a lot of things pointed in the right direction for the future. Not happy where we finished but happy about the job the guys did and the potential for the season."

Despite some tough recent runs in the Rolex 24 since GAINSCO, Gurney, Fogarty, and then co-drivers Jimmie Johnson and Jimmy Vasser, finished second in 2008, Gurney sees no reason why GAINSCO can't win the day-long race in the future.

"Winning the Rolex 24 is an attainable goal for the GAINSCO team," Gurney said. "We know how to win races. We have done it a lot in this series. This is the hardest race to win, so it will still be our carrot."

Team owner Bob Stallings also shook off this weekend's disappointments to take a positive look at both the short- and long-term plans.

"The best thing for us to focus on is that we had the fastest Corvette," Stallings said. "The Corvette is what we will run this year and, clearly, we're in much better control of that than anybody else. We will learn more about the car. I think we had the fastest lap of the new Corvettes and all that bodes well. In terms of the championship, we have walked out of here in much worse positions, including when we won our first title in 2007. We missed picking up one more position and point today at the end by four-and-a-half seconds, but we were having fun until the very end. These guys will be fine."

GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing, and each of the team's three drivers, earned 18 valuable championship points for the 13th place Rolex 24 result.

Next up for GAINSCO/Bob Stallings Racing and the GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series is the Porsche 250 at Barber Motorsports Park, in Birmingham, Alabama, March 30 – 31.

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Dempsey Racing Powers No. 40 Mazda RX-8 GT to Top-10 Finish

No. 40 Mazda Takes Third-Straight Rolex 24 Top 10; No. 41 Mazda Makes It to Finish For Team Seattle

Provided by Adam Saal – Dempsey Racing

Using the same determination, drive and total teamwork that produced last year's third-place podium result, Dempsey Racing's No. 40 VISIT FLORIDA/Share a Little Sunshine Mazda RX-8 GT was driven to its third consecutive top-10 finish in the Rolex 24 At Daytona, January 28 – 29. Team drivers Patrick Dempsey, Joe Foster, Charles Espenlaub, Tom Long and Charlie Putman all made a contribution in the weekend's 10th place result that follows last year's third place showing and a sixth-place result in 2010.

"I'm so proud of the team, I can't get over it," Dempsey said. "They just worked so hard all week, all through the testing. We had a lot of adversity, they overcame it, and just the consistency with the 40 car was great. Charles, Joe, Tom, Charlie, everybody did a great job. Really, really consistent, solid performance and as a team I couldn't be happier. To say coming into this weekend, we'd be coming out of here with a top-10 finish I would have been thrilled, completely. We stayed out of trouble, drove within ourselves, didn't take too many risks and it paid off in the end."

Dempsey Racing's sister No. 41 FishingCapital.com/Bass2Billfish with Team Seattle Mazda RX-8 GT also celebrated a determined finish of its own Sunday, albeit under different circumstances. The No. 41 was heavily damaged Saturday night after a blatant bump-and-run hit from another GT competitor, but the Dempsey Racing crew never thought for a minute about giving up. After lengthy repairs, the No. 41 returned to the race Saturday evening and team drivers Don Kitch Jr., Rick Johnson, Dan Rogers, Ian James and Scott Maxwell did their part to get the stricken car to the finish line in 27th place.

"It was a successful outing for Team Seattle, especially related to the kids," said Kitch, who both drives for and created the Team Seattle program. It was a bit of a war out there last night. We kind of lost a couple battles and that put us back a ways, but at the end of the day we raised \$150,000. The kids are the ones that win in this deal. I've run here with a lot of teams, but Dempsey Racing, Joe, Patrick and Mazda, VISIT FLORIDA, they made up their mind they were going to take good care of us. It doesn't get much more professional than this."

As both a team driver and Dempsey's motorsports business partner, Foster is already looking ahead to the coming weeks.

"We're hopefully going testing to improve the package that we have," Foster said. "We're going to do a little testing at Barber Motorsports Park, if we can, and just work on every aspect of the process. Considering the state of competition in GT right now, to finish 10th in our car was outstanding. Obviously we had a different kind of race this year than we had last year. We had to really come back from some adversity this year. We had some people say the 41 car was a write-off but it was on the track less than three hours after it got hit."

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Maxwell was part of the driver lineup in the No. 40 that finished sixth two years ago, but this weekend he was in the No. 41.

"My time in the car was actually pretty uneventful," Maxwell said. "The car really handled well the whole race. We were just a little down on power and therefore we didn't have the speed we needed. The car ran like a train. It's too bad we had a couple of little incidents but that's all it takes in this race, it's so competitive. I'm glad we finished the race but disappointed that we got caught up in an accident. This was great for Team Seattle. We were pounding in the laps and bringing it home, that was objective number one, and we're going to get that done."

Putman will drive the No. 41 all season with Espenlaub, but both drivers were in the No. 40 at the 50th Rolex 24.

"It was a learning experience for me," Putman said. "This was my first experience in this car. Outside of testing and some practice, I didn't have much time in the car to speak of, I had two laps. My first stint was at night. Daytona at night is pretty intimidating but we got through it and it got better each stint. My third stint was very comfortable, very good. I'm very happy with the car, with the team. I think we have good things for the future. I'm looking forward to the rest of this year. It's going to be a fun one. It's going to be intense."

Long was in the No. 40 for the second straight year and will also substitute for Dempsey whenever the popular actor's "day job" schedule keeps him from races this year.

"The VISIT FLORIDA Mazda was just really reliable," Long said. "Dempsey Racing did an awesome job this whole event. I really couldn't ask for any more. We did all we could and had all we could ask for with this team. I feel like my performance in the car was always there, it was just a matter of getting the balance of the car there so it was comfortable for everybody to drive."

Next up for Dempsey Racing and the GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series is the Porsche 250 at Barber Motorsports Park, in Birmingham, Alabama, March 30 – 31.

Noteworthy

Dempsey was very happy with the effort around the No. 41 Mazda. "Getting the 41 car back out there and raising \$150,000 for the Team Seattle Guild is fantastic," Dempsey said. "I think that's great."... Dempsey is also hoping for some testing before the next race, which is nearly two months away. "It's really hard to be out of the car that long, I need to get some testing in," Dempsey said. "This weekend I got a lot of seat time, which I really, really needed. I thought throughout the whole 24 hours, I kept getting better. I was more consistent and smoother. Lap times were consistent but I was really trying hard to concentrate on being smooth and consistent."... Kitch was able to pull a driving shift in the morning, his favorite time of day in a Rolex 24. "For me, the morning is my favorite part of the race," Kitch said. "I think most drivers here would say that. Sunday morning is a very, very special time. With the sun just coming up and the cars no longer looking the way they did when they started the race. They have their own beauty because they made it through the night. That's a very emotional time to drive here at Daytona."



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No. 4 eBay Motors/Children's Tumor Foundation/Racing4Research Porsche GT3 Perseveres to the Finish

Largest campaign launch to date with more than \$600,000 donated to Children's Tumor Foundation during landmark race

Provided by Adam Saal – SAAL GOOD Communications

The No. 4 eBay Motors/Children's Tumor Foundation/Racing4Research Porsche GT3 team had two goals this weekend: one was to complete the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona, and the other was to raise funding for research and awareness for neurofibromatosis (NF) through the Racing4Research program. Team drivers Ryan Eversley, Justin Bell, Daniel Graeff and Ron Yarab contributed to both efforts during the endurance classic, with Bell driving the car at the end of the race and more than \$600,000 raised through Racing4Research and the Children's Tumor Foundation (CTF).

The team moved off to a quick start with Eversley climbing through the field in the opening hours of the race and Bell running as high as sixth before an unwanted love tap created some issues.

"I had a great time in the car, except when I got tapped, sat there for three laps and was mildly aggravated, but the car felt really good," Bell said. "We were in sixth place when we got spun. We knew we weren't going to be the fastest, but it would have been kind of cool to be in the top 10 and we had the pace to achieve that."

Donations were also on pace this weekend for the Children's Tumor Foundation/Racing4Research program that increases awareness for NF and raises funds for research to find a cure for the debilitating disease. The program's fifth-year campaign began at the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona and has the double support of leading online companies eBay Motors and Quicken Loans Inc. The Rolex 24 Racing4Research program is the annual kickoff event for CTF fundraising. Donations can still be made at www.racing4research.org.

The No. 4 eBay Motors/Racing4Research campaign will also be featured later this year in a second season episode of The World's Fastest Car Show Hosted by Justin Bell, a unique web, mobile and app-accessible show available only at eBay Motors and on eBay Mobile.

"We had a great start to the CTF fundraising campaign, well over \$600,000 was raised during the race," said Jill Beck, Director of the Racing4Research program for the Children's Tumor Foundation.

"We don't even know the totals because we have the on-going eBay auctions. Plus donations are still coming in and I'm sure they'll keep coming in past the race. We're thrilled. We've been so proud to work with eBay Motors and Quicken Loans, they've been fantastic partners."

Graeff was honored to be part of the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona and to represent CTF for the annual fundraising launch.

"This weekend is very hard to put into words, it is very bittersweet," Graeff said. "For 24 hours every year for what is now the last five years, we've been a moment of joy and hope for CTF children and their families. We've raised more money here than we have in years before because of the exposure through terrific sponsors like eBay Motors and Quicken Loans."

After taking the checkered flag with the rest of the competitors, the No. 4 team celebrated their successes in completing the Golden Anniversary event and also launching the 2012 Racing4Research campaign to raise money for the Children's Tumor Foundation.

"Having Justin Bell on board and SPEED cooperating with us and showing us love on air and through our webcast was great," Beck said. "I really couldn't be more proud of what we accomplished this year. I'm just happy that we were able to finish the race, and take the checkered flag for the kids."

About the Children's Tumor Foundation and Racing4Research

Developed by the Children's Tumor Foundation, the Racing4Research (R4R) program utilizes competitive, professional auto racing as a vehicle to increase awareness of neurofibromatosis and raise funds for research through corporate sponsorship, personal donations, and individual fundraising by NF Heroes: children and adults from around the country who live with neurofibromatosis. NF affects one in every 3,000 children, more than cystic fibrosis, Duchenne muscular dystrophy and Huntington's disease combined, and can lead to a wide variety of complications, including blindness, bone abnormalities, cancer, deafness, disfigurement, learning disabilities and excruciating and disabling pain. The Racing4Research program offers children and families living with the disorder a uniquely empowering weekend, and has raised over \$1.5 million dollars since its inception five years ago. Donations can be made at www.racing4research.org.

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**Additional photos from the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24
at Daytona can be found at
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APR Motorsports Never Says Die At First Rolex 24

Team rallies to see checkered flag in 50th edition of Florida endurance classic

Provided by Efrain Olivares

It would be fair to say that things didn't go quite to plan for the no. 51 APR Motorsports Audi R8 Grand-Am in its first race - the 50th Rolex 24 at Daytona. Despite two multi-hour stints in the garage to make repairs, the team was determined to see the checkered flag in its first Rolex Series race.

Trouble first hit the Audi R8 just past the two-hour mark when Emanuele Pirro brought the car behind the wall during a full course caution, and the team had to replace the clutch - a big job on the mid-engined Audi R8 Grand-Am. The APR Motorsports team drew a large crowd of spectators in its garage area, which let out a loud cheer when the car was finally lowered back to the ground and sent back into the fray after a two-hour repair.

Worse news would come at 2:15 in the morning, when Nelson Canache was nudged off the track by a Ganassi Racing BMW Riley Daytona Prototype, sending him into the wall on the left side of the track approaching turn three. After another two-hour repair of the right front and right rear suspension of the Audi R8 Grand-Am, the car returned to the track with Dion von Moltke behind the wheel. However, von Moltke quickly brought the car back and further investigation revealed more damage than was originally thought.

The APR Motorsports crew worked through the night - and into the morning - and just after sunrise, the no. 51 Audi R8 Grand-Am returned to the track with Dr. Jim Norman behind the wheel. Norman, Ian Baas, von Moltke, Canache and Pirro cycled through the car until it had to be brought back to the garage to replace a faulty power steering pump.

Performing another miracle, the team rapidly replaced the pump and installed Norman in the car. Driving into the bus stop with a few minutes remaining, broken bodywork due to damage from earlier in the race caused Norman to spin and go off course. Norman was able to return the car to the pits and the team effected repairs and Norman was able to take the checkered flag in 31st position in the GT class.

The team's performance was not enough to secure the second class win for five-time Le Mans winner Emanuele Pirro in his second appearance in Daytona, but despite the struggles Pirro enjoyed his time with APR in Daytona.

"The race was a real struggle for everybody, but I really appreciate how the crew and the team worked so hard to keep us going," said Pirro. "It was a really special experience for me to come back and be a part of this race again after thirty one years. To have a good result is of course important, but the whole experience was really, really nice and I have had a very enjoyable time with Audi and APR."

Von Moltke, who will pilot the car for the 2012 Rolex Sports Car Series, takes several positive elements out of the Rolex 24 at Daytona.

"Having driven the car throughout the race, I really feel that this is a car that we can win with," said von Moltke. "We came to this race with very little testing time and data, and even though we had some problems we were really happy with the speed we had in the race. Audi and APR will make this car stronger than ever for the next race at Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Alabama. That is APR's home race, and with the support of PR Newswire and South African Airways, we will be looking to have a race that shows the true potential of the car."

Team owner Stephen Hooks, who graduated his team from the Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge to the Rolex Series for the first time, left Daytona frustrated with the result but encouraged by the effort of his crew - which worked miracles throughout the race to make sure the no. 51 APR Audi R8 Grand-Am saw the checkered flag.

"We can take two things away from our first Rolex 24 at Daytona," said Stephen Hooks, President and CEO of APR. "Our team can tackle anything that is thrown at them. They worked all night and did an amazing job to repair a substantial amount of damage on our R8. I've been bragging about our crew to everyone on our Live Blog. Under ridiculous circumstances and without any sleep since 6 AM yesterday they have made everybody on this team proud. I told them that we will have better outings and I was thrilled that our car crossed took the checkered flag. Finishing any 24 hour race is no small accomplishment, but when you look at what we were up against this race it is just unbelievable.

"The second thing is the performance of our drivers and our car for this season. We saw a lot of pace out of our Audi R8 Grand-Am, in the hands of all of our drivers. Dr. Jim, Dion, Nelson, Emanuele and Ian all did a great job behind the wheel and all were able to run very competitive times throughout the race. I'm very encouraged by that and I'm looking forward to the rest of the year."

The next race on the Rolex Series schedule is the Porsche 250 at Birmingham Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Alabama on March 31. The race will be shown live on SPEED Channel at 4:00 PM ET.

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Inspired Show From Ryan Dalziel Ends With Stunning Second Provided by Ryan Dalziel

THE PLOT: Ryan Dalziel produced one of the best drives of his career in the Grand-Am Rolex 24 at Daytona, but it still wasn't enough to win him his second Rolex watch.

Orlando-based Ryan, originally from Lanarkshire in Scotland, had put the Starworks Motorsport car on pole position on Thursday.

Then he turned in a flawless opening stint as the Fort Lauderdale-based team showed they had the power to take on the Grand-Am Sports Car Series big guns.

Ryan was just as good in his other stints and was perfectly backed up by Venezuelans Enzo Potolicchio and Alex Popow, fellow Scot Allan McNish and German Lucas Luhr.

But their stunning efforts were not enough as they finished just 5.1 seconds behind the winners.

THE QUOTES: "It is disappointing. I would be lying if I said I wasn't disappointed. We were the car to beat and it was nice to lead so many laps, but leading so many laps sometimes makes it feel worse when you don't take the checkered flag.

"On the plus side, it was an amazing race and the perfect way to mark the 50th running for Daytona. Starworks did an awesome job. Peter put together an amazing crew and we will now focus on the rest of the year.

"To win this race it takes an incredible car – and we had that.

"I have never been in such a dominant position before and not won the race. We were the dominant car and that is the hardest thing to take. We had the car to beat, but sometimes things do not go your way.

"Second place is great. We will probably appreciate it a bit more after a little time.

"We thought that we had something in the final stint. We had some damage and we bumped into things. But the last two stops, we made three seconds each time over the Shanks car. It was almost a fairytale ending to a tough two weeks for us.

"We qualified on pole, had the fastest lap but we didn't win. But it is hard to be overly disappointed when you think of where Starworks has come from."

THE FACTS: Ryan will also spearhead Starworks Motorsport's 2012 Grand-Am campaign. He will also compete with Starworks in the Continental Tires Sports Car. The next round is of the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series is at Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Alabama on March 31.

Ryan had four Rolex Grand-Am podiums in 2011 – a win at mid-Ohio and third at Barber, Lime Rock and Watkins Glen. He also had three fourth-place finishes. Ryan also gave Starworks Motorsports its first DP victory, at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, in 2008. Find out more at www.ryandalziel.com [Back To Top](#)

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Flying Lizard No. 45 Fifteenth in GT in the Rolex 24 At Daytona Provided by Flying Lizard Motorsports

The Flying Lizard No. 45 finished fifteenth in GT at today's Rolex 24 At Daytona. Patrick Long started fourth on the 44-car GT grid in the No. 45 Flying Lizard Porsche 911 GT3 Cup, which was run in conjunction with Wright Motorsports. It was a clean start for both classes; Long drove an uneventful 90-minute double stint, turning the wheel over to Mike Rockenfeller in P3. For the next 90 minutes, Rockenfeller fought some setup issues and a strong understeer, but kept the No. 45 free of several incidents that resulted in lengthy full course cautions.

At the three-hour mark, Joerg Bergmeister headed out in P9. Over his two-hour plus stint, Bergmeister moved to P2. After a pit stop and driver change to Seth Neiman, the No. 45 was on track again eighth in class. Neiman was nearing the end of his stint when the crew lost radio contact and called him into the pits. The No. 45 then made contact with another car, causing only minor damage to the left side but pushing the No. 45 back in the field.

After a driver change to Long, the No. 45 was back out on track, but was now in P16 and two laps down. For the rest of the evening, the Lizards continued to cycle through their driver lineup with few issues. Over the next 90 minutes, and several more full course cautions, Long was able to progress to P13, then turned the wheel over to Neiman, then Rockenfeller.

Over the long night, Mike Rockenfeller did a quadruple stint: he climbed from P19 to P15. Bergmeister took over at 3:40 am and continued to hold position over the next 2.5 hours, even with an unscheduled pit stop to replace the left rear wheel which had a strong vibration. At 6:00 am, Long took over, moving up to P10 over the next 2.5 hours. Seth Neiman was up next for an uneventful double stint, passing the No. 45 back to Mike Rockenfeller at 10 am in P11.

Rockenfeller and Bergmeister both slogged through multiple full course cautions in their stints, with the entire field becoming increasingly confused about track order during the wavebys, passes, and restarts. By 1 pm, and a driver change to Long, the No. 45 had progressed to P 10. With more cautions to come, Long was still able to avoid any major incidents and moved up to P8 as the attrition continued.

With less than 90 minutes left in the race, Patrick lost power steering and pitted immediately for the crew to diagnose the problem. The No. 45 went behind the wall to the garage, where the crew replaced the power steering pump. The No. 45 returned quickly to the track with Seth Neiman behind the wheel, but the repair cost the team precious time. With only one hour left, the No. 45 had to settle for a fifteenth place finish. The No. 44 Magnus Racing Porsche won in GT.

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Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates Take Fourth and Sixth in 50th Rolex 24 At Daytona **Provided by CGR Media**

The Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates (CGRFS) No.02 Target/TELMEX and No.01 TELMEX/Target Dinan-Prepared BMW Riley Daytona Prototype (DP) entries finished fourth and sixth, respectively, in the 50th Anniversary of the Rolex 24 At Daytona at Daytona International Speedway.

The No. 02 DP driven by 2006 Race Winner Scott Dixon and co-drivers Dario Franchitti (2008 Winner), Juan Pablo Montoya (2007, 2008 Winner) and NASCAR star Jamie McMurray had trouble in the overnight portion of the race when the team had to repair a broken shifter. The car headed to the garage area at 2:44 a.m. ET and returned to the track in ninth position and four laps down to the leader after a five-minute repair. The team was able to gain three laps back in the final two hours of the event to finish fourth with Montoya behind the wheel in the final stint.

After contending in the top three overall for most of the 24-hour race, four-time and defending Rolex 24 At Daytona Winner Scott Pruett and co-drivers Memo Rojas (2008, 2011 Winner), Graham Rahal (2011 Winner) and Joey Hand (2011 Winner) were running in second with just over an hour to go in the race when the No.01 DP encountered gear box issues and were forced to come pit road. The team lost ground after having to replace the gear box and rejoined the race in sixth and four laps down with just under 50 minutes until the checkered flag. With little time remaining to make up the time lost, the No.01 crossed the finish line sixth with Pruett behind the wheel in the final stint.

NOTES OF INTEREST:

- The 50th running of the Rolex 24 At Daytona had a total of 14 caution flags for 58 laps
- There were 10 total leaders over the course of the 24 hours
- The No. 01 TELMEX/Target Dinan-Prepared BMW Riley led a total of 96 out of 761 laps
- The No. 02 Target/TELMEX Dinan-Prepared BMW Riley led a total of 52 out of 761 laps
- Pruett led the most laps for CGRFS with a total of 79

- CGRFS has earned 10 top-five finishes in each Rolex 24 At Daytona since first competing in the race in 2004
- The race marked the first Rolex 24 At Daytona since 2005 that CGRFS finished off of the podium
- Pruett still holds the all-time class victory mark at the Rolex 24 At Daytona with nine (1987, 1988, 1992, 1993, 1994, 2002, 2007, 2008, 2011).
- Pruett has a record 37 overall GRAND-AM Rolex Series wins in addition to four overall wins at the Rolex 24 (1994, 2007, 2008, 2011)
- CGRFS still holds the greatest six-race stretch in Rolex 24 At Daytona history with four wins (2006, 2007, 2008, 2011) and two second-place finishes (2009, 2010) dating back to 2006
- CGRFS has five championships (2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2011) and 37 race wins since their introduction to the circuit in 2004– all GRAND-AM records
- Pruett and Rojas continue to be the most successful driving duo in series history with 23 GRAND-AM race wins

CGRFS QUOTEBOARD

SCOTT PRUETT – (No.01 TELMEX/Target Dinan-Prepared BMW Riley)

"What a race. You really never know what is going to happen here. This is the big one that we all love to win in sports car racing in America. We had a great car and even with the fact we had to overcome a gearbox issue near the end, I'm just not sure we had anything for the two Fords up front. It was a total team effort like always from the Ganassi team, and Memo and I are looking forward to Barber in March."

JUAN PABLO MONTOYA – (No.02 Target/TELMEX Dinan-Prepared BMW Riley)

"We gave it all we had. For the second year in a row we just couldn't make it happen. It's disappointing what happened in the middle of the night. I really enjoy running this race with this group of guys (Dixon, Franchitti and McMurray). One of these days we'll get this right and win it again."

The next GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series race for the CGRFS season-long effort in the No.01 TELMEX Dinan-Prepared BMW Riley with Pruett and Rojas will be at Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Al on March 31. The Porsche 250 will air on SPEED at 4:00 pm ET.

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OLIVER GAVIN'S ROLEX 24 AT DAYTONA – WHAT A WATCH!

Provided by Fiona Miller – Miller Media and Communications

Corvette Racing driver Oliver Gavin joined fellow Corvette drivers Antonio Garcia, Jan Magnussen and Richard Westbrook in the Spirit of Daytona Corvette-bodied Daytona Prototype in the 50th Anniversary of the Rolex 24 at Daytona, and finished 8th overall. Here he gives his thoughts and reflections on a superb weekend of racing for spectators and competitors alike.

“So here we are the day after the Rolex 24 at Daytona looking back on what must have been one of Grand-Am's best events ever. It's a shame our new Corvette DP No. 90 car wasn't able to figure a bit more in the mix at the front but we were pleased to bring a brand new car home in the top ten. We had lots of comments over the week about how beautiful the car looked – it's definitely raised the image of the DP cars significantly.

“The 50th running of the race was certainly the biggest Daytona event I've been to and both the series and track had pulled out all the stops to make it special. It was great to see some real top level drivers from lots of different categories come together to take part - Juan-Pablo Montoya, Dario Franchitti, Scott Dixon, AJ Allmendinger, Allan McNish to name just a few. There was also a very big GT field with a lot of factory drivers in it, and inevitably the size of the field had an effect on how the race evolved. It's a credit to a lot of the GT drivers there wasn't a big clash between one of the lead cars and a GT which would have re-shaped the race.

“It was clear right from the start that the Ford-engined cars would be fast, particularly the new Riley-bodied cars, and the first three finishers were always in contention for the win from the outset. I was pleased to be able to lead at the six hour mark, which we achieved through good strategy and pit stops, and I had fun racing with Ryan Dalziel in the Starworks car and the winning MSR No. 60 car.

“Of course I enjoyed driving with Antonio, Richard and Jan again; there's an easy, common understanding between the four of us and lots of banter goes backwards and forwards which is good fun and lightens the atmosphere at an otherwise tiring event. Our driving styles are slightly different, but we all had a basic good read on the car and got the best out of it we could. My only issue during the race was that, due to the difference in height across the line-up, I had to make quite a big compromise with my seating position and my left leg was giving me pain.

“My first time in the SDR car wasn't until 8:45pm which was quite a challenge as it was dark and quite cold by that stage. I was very tentative on the first lap out as it took so long for the tyres to heat up, particularly the fronts. You have to weigh up the risk versus reward; you don't want to lose time to your competitors but equally you don't want to fly off the road and cost the team laps and laps getting a fix. It's a tightrope to walk.

“Around the midway mark I was down in the pits getting ready for my second time in the car and all of a sudden I saw some of our guys leaving the pit box and lots of worried faces. It looked like we had a transmission problem as Richard had reported that he'd lost a certain amount of drive. We had broken an axle but unfortunately the fix was a bit more complicated than they first thought and it cost us 14 laps. Looking back, we

finished 15 laps down to the winner so we could have really been in contention but for that. The Rolex watch will have to wait for another year!"

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Darren Law Race Report

Provided by Sylvia Proudfoot

Darren Law and his Action Express Racing teammates notched a fifth-place finish in the Rolex 24 At Daytona on January 28 and 29. Law (Phoenix) and his co-drivers David Donohue (Malvern, Pa.) and Christian Fittipaldi (Key Biscayne, Fla.) overcame some new-car woes to post the highest finish for the new Corvette Daytona Prototype in the first race of the season at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Law started the No. 5 Action Express Corvette at the back of the 14-car prototype grid after missing the qualifying session due to an engine issue. He reported an engine misfire at the green flag and returned to pit lane for a new electronic control unit (ECU) for the engine. But the misfire continued until the team's engineers were able to reload the engine program after eight hours of the race.

"This was a very hard race," Law acknowledged. "Even the buildup to the race was tough for us, because we had an engine issue in the practice just before qualifying and didn't get to qualify. On the first lap, we had a heavy misfire and came in. The team changed out the ECU, which cost us a lap. We spent the first eight hours with that same misfire, trying to work through it. Eventually, we put in a whole new engine program, reloaded the entire system. That seemed to get rid of the misfire, but I don't know that we produced as much horsepower as we should have."

Law, Donohue and Fittipaldi all drove triple stints throughout the race, turning in a flawless performance that was matched by excellent pitwork from the Action Express crew.

"I've got to commend my teammates, David Donohue and Christian Fittipaldi. We went with three drivers this year and all of us went trouble-free for the entire 24 hours," Law said. "It was a long, hard race for us, fighting through some issues, but the team persevered, the Chevy guys did a great job, the Pratt & Miller guys did a great job on the new car. I think we've got a lot of potential for future races."

Off-track, Law is chief operating officer for the Bob Bondurant School of High Performance Driving. He received some pre-race tips from his boss, Bob Bondurant.

"I gave media rides on Saturday morning, the morning of the race, in the Chevrolet pace car," Law explained. "I took both Bob and Pat [his wife], so Bob gave me a few pointers as I was going around the banking before the start of the race. He liked the first ride so much, he went to the back of the line and got back in again and did another lap with me on the track!"

Law was happy to lead the Corvette contingent in the season-opener for the 2012 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series.

"I think we're a little behind the eight-ball here because everything is new – body, engine, chassis – so we're on a steep learning curve. But we learned a ton of stuff this weekend," he said.

"Although, of course, we wanted to win, the next goal was to be top Chevrolet, which is what we did. Coming out of the 24-hour with fifth-place points is good. It's a reasonable start to the season – a lot of other guys had a lot of other issues and didn't fare as well as us, so we're looking forward to getting on with the season now."

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Jeff Segal and AIM Autosport Team FXDD Ferrari 458 Italia GT Grand Am Finish Eighth In Debut at 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona

No. 69 Maintains Top-10 Performance Throughout Golden Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona Event

Provided by Adam Saal

Jeff Segal and AIM Autosport Team FXDD finished eighth in the GT division at the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona, January 28 – 29, where the former series champion joined full-season co-driver Emil Assentato, and their teammates Nick Longhi and Anthony Lazzaro, in an encouraging race debut for the new No. 69 Ferrari 458 Italia GT Grand Am.

After qualifying on the outside front row on Thursday, Segal started the No 69 Ferrari on Saturday afternoon and actually led the first few 100 yards into Turn 1 of the Rolex 24 At Daytona.

“The plan at the start of the race was to either get to the lead and stay there safely, or tuck in wherever it made sense and not get into a fight,” Segal said. “I made a play for the lead, it didn’t work out, and then I settled into the top five. We knew there were a lot of Porsches determined to get to the front and we didn’t really want any part of that showmanship. We just wanted to keep the car in one piece.”

Looking back on the event, Segal recognized the accomplishments of the debut race for the AIM Autosport Team FXDD Ferrari and gives credit to the key players for their dedication and hard work.

“The car was really strong throughout the race,” Segal said. “I was impressed that a brand new car made it through a 24 hour race without any issues, so that was fantastic. Full credit goes to Ferrari, Michelotto and AIM Autosport for preparing the car as well as they did. We’ve done a lot of the development work. From a driving perspective I was very comfortable with the car before the race, but I’m even more comfortable with the car after the race. I’m really looking forward to getting the car on an actual road course where our straight line speed deficiency isn’t quite so obvious. Then we can focus on things this car does really well like the drivability, the braking, the handling and so forth.”

Reviewing the data and timing sheets, Segal noted he kept time with the race leaders regardless of where they were in the field.

“We always we had the pace of the leaders,” Segal said. “When I was running in the top five, I was turning the same lap times as the top two. I had an incident with a Mustang in the middle of the night and that put us down a lap, but we were still running the same pace as the leaders.”

Earning 23 valuable championship points for the eighth place finish was another huge plus for Segal, particularly after his car was taken out early in last year’s race and he didn’t earn a single point.

"We're leaving Daytona with more points this season than we have in the last few years," Segal said. "That makes me feel good, but more importantly we have a car that's in one piece. We learned a lot about this car in this race. We battled some brakes issues throughout the race which made it very, very tricky to drive the car, but the pace was there and the reliability was there."

Next up for Jeff Segal and AIM Autosport Team FXDD is the Porsche 250 at Barber Motorsports Park, in Birmingham, Alabama, March 30 – 31.

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KROHN Racing Team Report

Provided by Barbara Burns

The 50th Annual Rolex 24 at Daytona race had all the excitement you would expect such a momentous race to produce. Three cars finished on the lead lap, Lap 761, with drivers John Pew, Oswaldo Negri, Jr., AJ Allmendinger and Justin Wilson in the No. 60 Ford Riley of Michael Shank Racing on the top step of the podium.

The No. 76 Krohn Racing Proto-Auto Lola Ford finished 11th in class/19th overall with team owner/driver Tracy W. Krohn, Nic Jönsson, Colin Braun and Ricardo Zonta. A drive train problem at 3:00 a.m. ET, just before the 12-hour mark, forced the Krohn Team into the garage for over an hour and they experienced a loss of 38 laps, putting the team out of race contention.

However, thereafter Krohn's car ran faultlessly to complete the full 24 hours. After the race, Team Owner/Driver Tracy Krohn said he was committed to return to Daytona, seeking the Rolex 24 victory that he has worked towards over the past eight years.

This year's historic 24-hour race featured 49 car lead changes among 53 different drivers in a thrilling contest with unusually few full course safety car periods.

Tracy Krohn, Driver, Owner/Driver, No. 76 Krohn Racing Proto-Auto Lola Ford:

"We had a lot of hopes going in, as you always do in a race. Unfortunately, we had mechanical issues that were unforeseen. The team did a really good job putting the car together and getting us back out of the track. I'm very happy we finished. I was a little disappointed with the result, of course. But that's racing. I am determined that sooner or later we're going to win this S-O-B race."

Colin Braun, Driver, No. 76 Krohn Racing Proto-Auto Lola Ford:

"It's tough when you have lost many laps like we did. In the final stints we were just logging laps. Oliver Gavin and I had a fun race in my final stint. When you're so many laps ahead and behind one another, you have to do something to make the time go by. It was fun to race Gavin and have a good view watching the leaders race. It's one of those unfortunate places to be because he's 30-some laps ahead, or we're 30-some laps behind him. The important thing is to keep making laps around the race track. We had to do that first and then look for something to make it exciting."

Nic Jönsson, Driver, #76 Krohn Racing Proto-Auto Lola Ford:

"The outcome is obviously not what we were looking for. We were hoping to be in the Winner's Circle right now. We were running seventh at the point where a driveline failed. I don't think we had the pace for a podium here today. This car is designed to win a championship, where two-thirds of the tracks are high downforce tracks. It's not surprising that the car is not at its best on a high-downforce track.

"The Krohn guys did an exceptional job again, as always, throughout the whole 24 hours. Pit stops were great. If nothing else, this race was a very good preparation and practice for the 24 Hours of Le Mans that's coming up in the middle of June. Now we head back home, recoup, sleep a little bit and test the new Ferrari F458 next week and start focusing on the main program, the WEC (World Endurance Championship) this year."

Ricardo Zonta, Driver, #76 Krohn Racing Proto-Auto Lola Ford:

"This team feels like a family. Even though today was not a great result for us everyone was all together to figure where the problems were and to improve for next year."

David Brown, Team Manager/Race Engineer, Krohn Racing:

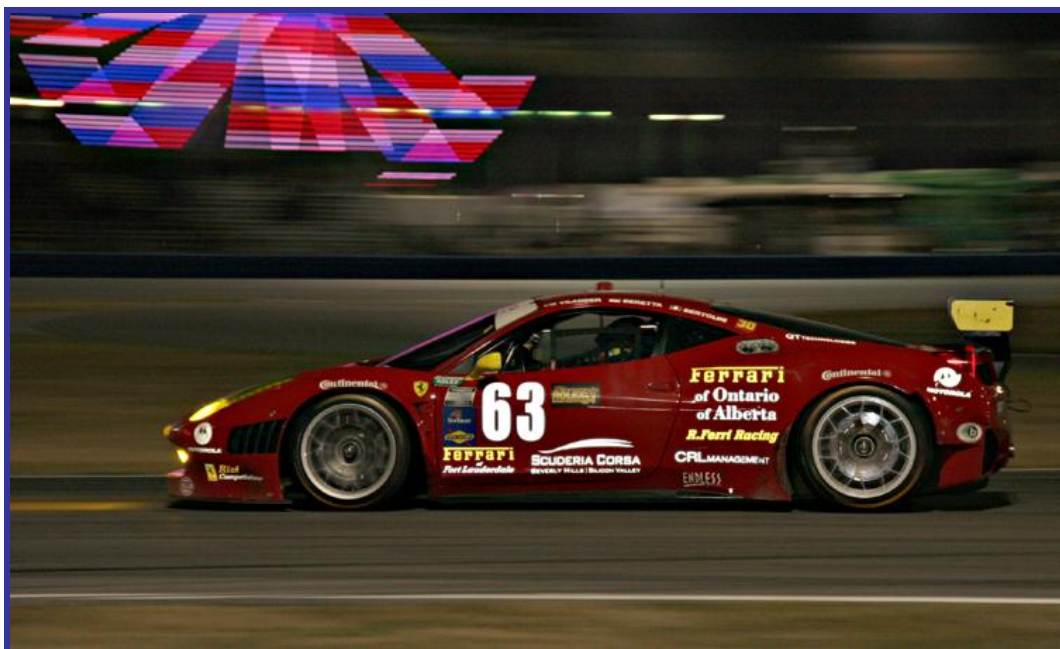
"We were disappointed not to have been much closer to the front. Although we really didn't have the pace to win the race or even be on the podium. We thought we could put in a good day's work and finish in the Top 6. However, we suffered a mechanical problem, which put us in the garage for one hour and five minutes and put us down 38 laps down on the field. From then on, we just serviced the car, cycled through the drivers and ran until the end, because that's what we do. We now will focus on the important business of the WEC."

Jeff Hazell, Motorsports Manager, Krohn Racing:

"Obviously we were disappointed. We had a drive line failure that needs looking into. It's not something we expected to experience here. That particular component requires a major assembly change. Although it had been practiced, it did not go as quickly in the heat of the moment as it had done in the workshop practice. We have to look into that just as we have to look at the positive aspects. Once again the Team had flawless pit stops. The only problem was a seatbelt snag. Other than that, the stops were fine. The pace was okay but this race was so competitive, with a high standard of reliability. I think we would have been able achieve a sixth place at best. That speed and reliability bodes well for this race in the future. We have to work even harder, come back here and step on the podium, but that makes the challenge worthwhile!"

For more information, go to www.grand-am.com or www.krohn racing.net

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RISI FERRARI ACHIEVES TOP FIVE ENDURANCE SUCCESS ON DEBUT OF F458 ITALIA GRAND-AM AT DAYTONA

Provided by Fiona Miller – Miller Media and Communications

Ferrari returned to Daytona International Speedway this weekend with significant style and commitment for the Rolex 24 at Daytona's 50th anniversary running of the twice-round-the-clock race.

It brought from Italy its new Ferrari 458 Italia Grand-Am specification GT3 challenger and, in the hands of Toni Vilander, Andrea Bertolini and Olivier Beretta, the No. 63 Risi Competizione with American Canadian Racing entry took on the might of the historic Porsche brand and achieved a very satisfying fifth place finish in the GT class.

With 45 competitors in the production-led category, and a total grid of 59 cars, the race promised much and delivered tenfold. There was tight racing and flag-to-flag competition throughout, and the No. 63 challenged for a podium finish in the final hours of the race. The winning Magnus Racing Porsche ultimately displayed a greater top speed and a more developed fuel economy than the new Ferrari, however, and the marque, its drivers and the whole Risi Competizione with American Canadian Racing partnership was pleased with the end result.

"It's an honor to come and race here," said Team Principal Giuseppe Risi at the end of the race. "It's an honor to be part of the 24 Hours at Daytona which is a name that's so synonymous with motor racing around the world. It's a great venue, the track plays a great part in Ferrari's history and I'm very happy to be involved with Ferrari and the track today.

"We brought two cars here to race which had relatively little development for this very specific test – the banking alone is unlikely to match anything else the car will face in its racing life. We had a superb line-up of the best drivers available and they all did a fantastic job representing Ferrari and its North American dealer network. It's obviously extremely disappointing that the No. 62 suffered the engine problem in the first part of the race, and that we weren't able to bring both cars home to the finish."

Despite there being 14 full course caution periods which interrupted the race's green-flag running, the No. 63 ran free of any mechanical issues, and was only slightly delayed in the pits at the very beginning of the event due to a malfunctioning fueling hose. Inconvenienced rather than troubled by the way the early yellows fell, the Risi Competizione with American Canadian Racing team was delighted to get a 'free pass' just before midday today (Sunday) which enabled the car and its driving team to truly challenge its nearest rivals more equally. All three drivers rose to the challenge and drove superbly, maintaining a steady and quick-lapping pace which even

put them at the top of the GT time sheets at one point. The many pit stops (31 in total for the No. 63) meant there was some see-sawing of position throughout the race, but the car was never out of the top six GTs once dawn broke.

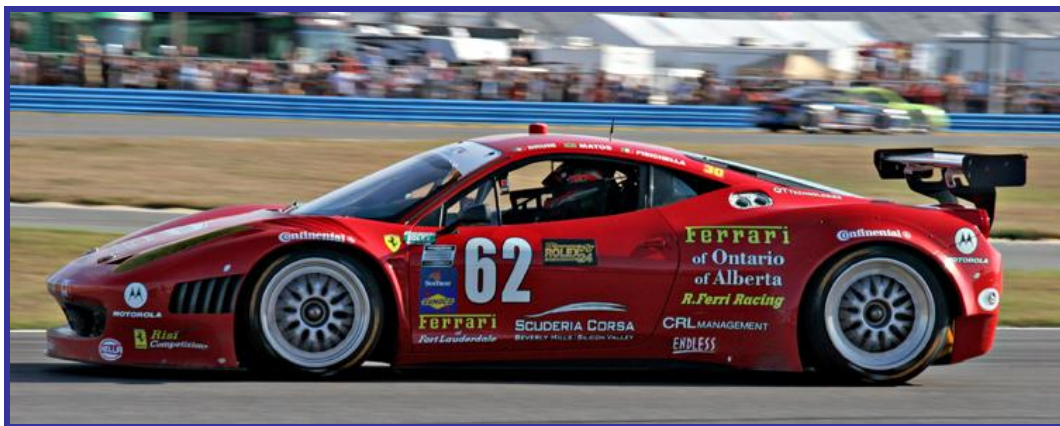
Ferrari's most recently-signed driver, and overall winner at Daytona in 2000, Olivier Beretta, reflected after the race: "First of all I want to thank everyone at Risi Competizione. I knew all the mechanics' faces from races in the past but I hadn't worked with them and they did a superb job. Our engineer and every mechanic was great and it's a shame we didn't win, which was the target, but we proved that the car was super-competitive.

"We lost a bit of time here and there during the race, and at the end the Porsches were quicker in a straight line and I was in a tow. I didn't have fresh air, just warm air and the brakes weren't working at their best. I was trying to push hard, but avoid any mistakes, and we ended up fifth. Everyone has seen the Ferrari is fast but we have to remember the Porsches have been racing here for many, many years and we just arrived a few months ago."

Four time FIA GT1 World Champion and Scuderia Ferrari F1 development driver, Andrea Bertolini commented: "I think we all did a good job and we were really consistent and pushed hard in the dark to make up some time and challenge at a high level in the class. If you consider we're here for the first time, I think everyone at Ferrari, in the Risi team and at Michelotto should be proud of this result.

"The car is completely new and it's been well developed but this maybe wasn't the best track for it although it was very consistent and quick in the infield. At the end, after 24 hours we were on the same lap as some very experienced Porsche teams and highly developed cars so I think this will be one of the strongest cars in the Grand-Am series in the future. I want to thank Giuseppe, all the guys on the team and our engineers Mark and Roberto who did an excellent job as we were all here as first-timers. Now we have to come back and finish the job by winning in the future."

Double FIA GT2 Champion and Risi regular in North American racing, Toni Vilander, smiled through the exhaustion of the event: "I must say that it was a hard race! It's totally different to any other 24-hour races I've done and the traffic, the infield, the re-starts, the 12 or 13 hours of darkness all together take the energy out of you. At some points we were quite quick but we made a few mistakes and, to be realistic, I don't think we had a real chance to win this year. We couldn't match the Porsches; it's one thing to be on the same lap with wave bys but it's another thing to race against them. It was our first time here and I don't know how many times they've done it but it's a lot! We learnt a lot and, if and when we come back, we will be quick when it matters."



The No. 62 entry of Gianmaria Bruni, Giancarlo Fisichella and Raphael Matos had made steady progress through the GT field from their back-of-the-grid starting position and were beginning to make an impact on the race when, in the fifth hour, the car experienced a sudden lack of power. Bruni brought the car back to the garage where it was determined that the car would be unable to continue. The full cause of the problem will be investigated in due course.

Former Indycar driver and winner of the Rolex 24 at Daytona GT class in 2008, Raphael Matos, spoke on behalf of his team mates when he said: "I think giving all the problems we had – starting from the back and having a flat tire early in the race – we were just recovering and climbing up the charts. The car was very solid and handling very well and it's just a shame we couldn't finish the race. It's an important race for Ferrari and Risi Competizione with American Canadian Racing, but at least we still had the No. 63 car running and our team mates did a fine job for us." [Back To Top](#)



FOAMETIX®/Burtin Racing with Goldcrest Motorsports Strong Early in 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 Before Late Race Issues and Setbacks

No. 17 FOAMETIX/Burtin Racing Porsche GT3 runs as high as fourth in opening hours

Provided by Adam Saal

The No. 17 FOAMETIX®/Burtin Racing with Goldcrest Motorsports Porsche GT3 had some early success in this weekend's 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona but ultimately ended up 33rd in the GT division after a string of bad luck and typical endurance-race issues.

Throughout Saturday's opening hours of the race, Martin Ragginger, team owner/driver Claudio Burtin, Rolex 24 veteran Jack Baldwin, first-year team driver Bryan Sellers and debuting Daytona driver Sebastian Asch all piloted the No. 17 Porsche. Ragginger was first to drive for the FOAMETIX Porsche team and quickly moved from his ninth-place starting position to fourth in class just over 30 minutes into the race. It would ultimately be the top showing of the No. 17 FOAMETIX Porsche in the race, however, as a mix of issues emerged early Saturday evening despite top-notch preparation from Burtin Racing and Goldcrest Motorsports.

"We brought a Porsche with all new parts, good quality, solid preparation and good drivers and it didn't go our way," Baldwin said. "I'm really perplexed about the whole thing. I'm a little disappointed, but at the same time I'm very happy that I was able to be part of this effort at the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona. I think everyone is disappointed, but I think everyone is proud of the job they did and they should be. The results don't show it, but in the end, it is what it is, so we'll go on to the next race."

Sellers was at the wheel after Ragginger's solid opening run on Saturday when the first issue emerged.

"We were making up ground and everything was going well," Sellers said. "About five laps from our driver change, I thought I had a rear tire going down, but when we came in they realized it wasn't actually a tire going down, it was water getting on the rear tire. We had a hole in the radiator. Something had gone through the screens and punctured the radiator. I'm super disappointed. I feel like we were pretty good, all in all. To have this happen four hours into the race is just gut-wrenching. All this time, money and effort put into everything for this to happen. It kind of blindsides you."

After the early race radiator change, the No. 17 experience a myriad of endurance racing problems in the remainder of the race, including an off-track incident and a faulty transmission during the race's final minutes.

"Everything went smooth when I was in the car," Ragginger said. "I just had small problems on my last stint because the front bumper was broken and I had a lot of vibrations. Then at the end the sixth gear blew up in the car. I'm a little bit disappointed for everything because the team effort was amazing this year."

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Bryan Sellers Race Report

Provide by Tom Moore, Bryan Sellers Racing

In the 50th Anniversary of the Rolex 24, Sellers looked primed to better his CTSCC success and possibly even his 2011 Rolex 24 runner-up finish. Sharing the No. 17 Porsche with past Rolex 24-winner Jack Baldwin (Marietta, Ga.), team owner Claudio Burtin (Marietta, Ga.), Sebastian Asch (Germany) and Martin Ragginger (Stuttgart, Germany), the team was a dark horse contender in the 54-car field. With Ragginger starting, Sellers followed owner Burtin into the Porsche. Taking the wheel two-hours and 30-minutes into the race, Sellers charged the car from 22nd to 19th in ten minutes! He continued the controlled tirade moving-up five spots in 20-minutes. As the hours mounted, the track became dirty with debris. A piece of rubbish pierced the radiator of the car in the fourth-hour ending Sellers dramatic move to the front of the field. A lengthy repair dropped the No. 17 back to 32nd. The car would also suffer gearbox damage when a competitor struck the Burtin Porsche from behind. It was taken to the garage and worked-on overnight. Sellers would triple-stint the Porsche in the early Sunday morning hours before turning-over driving duties to his teammates. In total, they covered 424 laps finishing 33rd.

Sellers: "I was happy with my first stint. We started from almost last and were able to make our way back up into the Top-10. It is difficult to tell how many cars you are passing at this race because it seems like it is constant traffic but I felt like we were gaining. We ended that stint with a puncture in the radiator. We are not sure how it happened or what actually did it but it was a rare occurrence that started our downfall. Getting back in and doing a triple [stint] the next morning was difficult after you are down so many laps. However, we are professionals and it's our job to rise to the occasion. Not to mention we have the best job in the world. I wanted so badly to repeat this year and have a good result but we were not able to do so. Still, how unhappy can you be driving a Porsche 911 around Daytona in the 50th anniversary of one of the greatest races in the world?"

For more on Bryan Sellers, please visit him on the web at www.BryanSellersRacing.com

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Quotes From Members Of The No. 10 Suntrust Corvette Dp Team Following Retirement From The Rolex 24-Hour After Valve Train Issues: Provided by Team Chevy

WAYNE TAYLOR, OWNER WAYNE TAYLOR RACING NO. 10 SUNTRUST CORVETTE DP: "It's really disappointing, but at the same time this is what happens in this, the driver, even though there was a statement that Max might've over-revved the engine – that's absolutely not the case. There's a problem in the valve train; quite honestly, we're not exactly sure what it is, but there's a problem enough for us to pull the car out. We clarified with Grand-Am that both Max and Ricky will get points based on the fact that he did do his 30 minutes and because of catastrophic failure, the second driver automatically gets points. We will go on here with [14th-place] points, [18] points down. But at the same time, we came into this weekend feeling very upbeat. Everybody, all of the support we've had from GM, SunTrust, Dallara and Corvette, everybody. We'll just go back, regroup and we'll go to the next event."

ANY INDICATION DURING THE WEEK, DURING PRACTICE, THAT THERE WERE GOING TO BE PROBLEMS, OR DID THIS JUST CATCH YOU OFF GUARD? "We've never had an engine problem in all the time we've run the Chevrolet engine program, so this is the first time. There was truly nothing we were worried about. In fact, this is probably the one 24 Hour I think we all felt – the only thing we were worried about was traffic, and we didn't have any issues. Really caught us by surprise."

REGARDING THE ISSUE THE NO. 5 CORVETTE DP HAD EARLIER IN THE RACE: "Totally unrelated."

MAX ANGELELLI, NO 10 SUNTRUST CORVETTE DP: ANY INDICATION DURING THE WEEK, DURING PRACTICE, THAT THERE WERE GOING TO BE PROBLEMS, OR DID THIS JUST CATCH YOU OFF GUARD? "We had no indication. We tested the engine yesterday, and it was all good."

RICKY TAYLOR, NO. 10 SUNTRUST CORVETTE DP: TALK ABOUT YOUR EMOTIONS, YOU WEREN'T ABLE TO EVEN GET IN THE CAR, HOW TOUGH IS THIS TO SWALLOW? "It's such a big build up for it (Rolex 24-Hour) and it is the 50th anniversary. With our new car, there is a lot of excitement. The guys gave done so much work at the shop; put in numerous 12 to 18 hour days. It is really tough. Now we have over a month until our next race. I know we'll come back at Barber (Motorsports Park) and redeem ourselves."

IS THE KEY FOR YOU AND MAX (ANGELELLI) THAT THE SEASON IS NOT LOST? "There's 14 cars. It is hard to make up points. The 24 Hour we always have the most cars of any reason, so we are losing more points than we can gain in any other single race. We'll just have to go out there and pick up where we left off at the end of last season and just win a lot of races."

RYAN BRISCOE, NO. 10 SUNTRUST CORVETTE DP: CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE EMOTIONAL LETDOWN; YOU NEVER EVEN GOT A CHANCE TO GET IN THE CAR: "It is just tremendously disappointing. The effort that everyone on the whole team put in and Wayne (Taylor), Max (Angelelli), Ricky (Taylor), the engineers, all the mechanics; this is a big race for this whole team and proud to be a part of it. Still am. Obviously it hurts right now not to have a shot at winning the 50th."

IS THIS THE EQUIVALENT OF BEING AT INDY FOR THE WHOLE MONTH OF MAY AND THEN JUST GOING OUT ON LAP ONE, IS IT THE SAME? "Yes, definitely. Very similar. I think Grand-Am did an amazing job of promoting this event. The turn-out today was huge. Great vibe around this championship at the moment and about this race. Just being a part of it would have been nice. Just being a part of the 24-Hour at the end is very special. We hate packing up now and we are only a couple of hours into the race. We are all sort of hanging our heads a bit low right now; but proud of the work everyone did."

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American premiere for Audi R8 GRAND-AM

Provided by Audi Communication Motorsports

Further boost for an attractive scene: the GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series has a new member - the Audi R8 GRAND-AM. Two examples of the powerful 480 hp GT sportscar celebrated their premiere in tough conditions at Daytona. The customer teams APR Motorsport and Oryx Racing were classified at the finish.

Audi Sport customer racing's attractive program is a valuable element richer: the Audi R8 GRAND-AM vitalizes the hard fought North American market in GT racing since January. No less than 44 GT race cars contested the season opener in Florida. The 50th running and anniversary event of the 'Rolex 24 at Daytona' provided a worthy venue for the debut of the Audi R8 GRAND-AM car. Team APR Motorsport finished in 31st place with its drivers Ian Baas (USA)/Nelson Canache (YV)/Dion von Moltke (ZA)/Dr. Jim Norman (USA)/Emanuele Pirro (I). Oryx Racing came home in 32nd place with Humaid Al Masood (UAE)/Saeed Al Mehairi (UAE)/Steven Kane (GB).

At all other GRAND-AM races up to the end of September the race car, newly developed by quattro GmbH, will compete in the United States and Canada in the hands of private customer teams. The customer racing car is distributed through Audi of America. Brad Kettler, who has been integrated for many years as engineer in Audi's Le Mans program, has built up a service and logistic structure. As a result, the Audi customers are provided with expert support during race preparation and also during the events.

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Frisselle Racing Scores Seventh in 50th Rolex 24

Provided by Frisselle Racing.com

The Rolex 24 At Daytona has long been recognized as one big sprint race.

Unfortunately in every sprint race, every step matters, and all it took was one quick misstep for the Frisselle brothers' run in the 2012 Rolex 24 At Daytona to be compromised.

The pair joined Jim Lowe and Paul Tracy in the No. 77 Combos/Circle K Ford-Dallara for the historic 50th running of the event and battled back after an early-race motor issue to finish seventh.

Brian qualified the car 10th and as he opened the 24-hour endurance classic, he immediately noticed that the No. 77 was down on power. Following his hour-long opening stint, the team sent the No. 77 Ford to the garage where the Roush-Yates engineers quickly identified the problem, replacing a coil and spark plugs to have the car back on track, fighting from several laps down.

Burt returned to the order deep in the field, but the persevering team continued on with all four drivers cycling through and running clean and trouble-free laps. The team did everything they could to make up time. But in a race that saw few cautions and ran a blistering fast pace that set a new DP-era record of 761 laps completed at Daytona International Speedway, the group just did not catch the lucky breaks they needed.

"It wasn't what we wanted," said Brian. "I was really disappointed to start off with that coil issue right at the beginning, but other than that the car ran very smoothly the rest of the race. Burt and Paul did a great job and I'm just happy to finish this long race. We've seen cars come back from being several laps down, so we didn't want to give up. But this race just was not ours. I think it shows how perfectly it has to go to win this race--one small problem and that was it. Thanks to the team for the effort, all day and all night and all day. On to the next one."

"It was a bummer that we fell down so many laps right at the beginning because I feel like if we hadn't of had that one issue I think we would have been in contention for a top-five," added Burt. "We knew that we didn't have the outright pace, but once we got the car sorted it was just fuel and tires the rest of the way and that would have probably paid off with a stronger finish. At least we made it to the finish and got a start on the Endurance Championship here. Hopefully we'll be back in action soon, and can build on this start to the year."

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Alex Job Racing Finishes 14th and 17th at Rolex 24 At Daytona

Provided by Alex Job Racing.com

Alex Job Racing (AJR) finished the 50th Anniversary GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series Rolex 24 At Daytona 14th and 17th this afternoon at Daytona International Speedway.

The No. 24 McKenna Porsche/Battery Tender/ Kensington/Koss Stereophones/Alex Job Racing GT3 Cup car driven by Cort Wagner, Bill Sweedler, Fred Poordad, Bob Faieta and Michael Avenatti took a conservative measured approach to the race. The five drivers ran consistent lap times, never went to the garage for repairs, kept the yellow, red and white Porsche on the track and were rewarded with a top 14 finish in GT, 25th overall in the 54 car field today. Any other year a good, no problem run like that would be a top five finish or even a podium.

"My last stint was fun," Poordad said. "The track was greasy and there was a lot of traffic. I got punted in the Horse Shoe, but managed to keep the car straight and on the track. It was a great experience to run this race. Our guys brought the car back in one piece for a good finish. It was fun. I enjoyed it."

"It was a great race, with the 50th anniversary," Sweedler said. "We were looking for a podium, but there was great competition today. We got screwed up on the wave-bys. It was disappointing the way that those were managed. This is an incredible event. You have the best drivers from around the world, a great experience to be here."

"I had a great weekend," Wagner said. "Alex Job and the WeatherTech team, sharing the information, it was a real team effort. All our guys got along great and did a great job driving. I enjoyed the process with the guys and the team. Any other year we would have had a top five finish. The new rules are confusing with the yellows and the wave-bys and I think everyone on pit lane had problems with it."

"This was awesome," Faieta said. "My stints today were great until we lost second gear in the afternoon. We were able to drive around it to the finish. It was a great experience, and I hope to do it again next year."

"The car ran as good as could be expected," Avenatti said. "Alex and the team, our crew chief Bill Radar, all did a great job preparing the car. It is a really difficult race with the level of competition. A top fifteen finish is good for us. All the drivers did a great job. We ran a near-perfect race."

The No. 23 WeatherTech/Alex Job Racing Porsche was running strong in sixth place on lap 728, around 1:30 p.m. Marco Holzer was in the car and exiting the Bus Stop Turn when a suspension problem stopped him on the apron of NASCAR Turn Three. The No. 23 WeatherTech Porsche had to be towed to the garage for repairs. Cooper MacNeil returned to the action taking the checkered flag in 17th. The team consisting of Holzer, MacNeil, Emmanuel Collard, and Butch Leitzinger ran a good fault-free race until the suspension problem.

"The car was great up until two-and-a-half-hours to go when Marco had the part failure," MacNeil said. "You can't prevent machinery from breaking. The AJR guys and WeatherTech put a great car on the track. I had a great weekend. I ran the fastest laps that I have ever run here. I was happy with my driving, and I am looking to improve to come back even stronger next year."

"My last stint was really bad," Collard said. "The safety car was a disaster. Every restart I had to warm the tires again. I had a small problem with the brakes. The crew was able to fix it. The balance of the car was bad at the end, there was a lot of understeer. But all of these things you expect at the end of a 24-hour race. It is too bad about the part problem at the end."

"We had a good run," Leitzinger said. "I was leading this race once with a two-hour lead and blew a motor with two-and-a-half hours to go. I can't kick any dogs over this. I feel bad for the crew. When you can see daylight, it is tough to have to do serious repairs that late in the going. It is fun to be with a professional group like AJR. David MacNeil from WeatherTech was very supportive, and I enjoyed my co-drivers."

"Before we had the suspension problem the car was great," Holzer said. "I was able to drive the fastest race lap in GT, which is good for the team and means the car was very good. We were unlucky with the yellows. Three times we came into refuel then yellows came out, just unlucky. We lost three laps as a result."

Team owner, Alex Job, is happy to have both cars finish, yet thinks of what could have been.

"The guys in the 23 WeatherTech Porsche were really fast," Job said. "Into the night we were swapping the lead among six cars until the early hours of the morning. We had some tough luck with yellow flags that put us down three laps. It was just too hard to come back with the level of competition in the GT class this weekend. The 24 McKenna Porsche Battery Tender car ran really fault-free all weekend. The guys took a measured approach and any other year that was a top five run or even a podium."

Alex Job Racing is one of the most successful teams in sports car racing with 39 wins, including a 1999 Rolex 24 GT Class win. This record is supported by 46 pole positions and 84 podium finishes. The team has won three championships (GT in 2002, 2003 and 2004) complimented by their two GT class wins at Le Mans. The team also boasts seven Sebring 12-hour wins.

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Orbit Racing

Link To Team Video http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLr4iwjAVs4&feature=player_embedded

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50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona A Race For The Ages

Ford, Porsche Podium Sweeps, Strong International Interest Builds On History Of Storied Event

The 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona was heralded as the most anticipated sports car race in North American motorsports history.

If anything, the event even exceeded those lofty expectations. Daytona International Speedway looked to sports car racing in its bid to live up to "The World Center of Racing" when it ran the first event now known as the Rolex 24 At Daytona in 1962.

Spectators rubbed shoulders with competitors throughout the weekend in GRAND-AM's fan-friendly environment. The Daytona International Speedway infield reached its spectator infield camping capacity at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday. General consensus: It was the largest crowd in the history of the event, with various attendance estimates by media members on hand ranging from 60,000-80,000.

The event buzz included the 50 Years of Champions celebration, in which 29 of the winning cars from the past paraded through the streets of Daytona Beach to the speedway, where they were reunited with 50 champion drivers. The race field included stars from NASCAR, open wheel, Formula One and international sports car racing.

"It was gratifying to see all the famous cars and drivers from the past coming together with the exciting new cars and many of today's top competitors," said GRAND-AM President Tom Bledsoe. "It was fantastic to see the new Daytona Prototypes and GT cars mixing it up at such an intense level for the entire race. It was a pleasure to see all the international drivers and media coming up to support the Rolex 24, once again showcasing GRAND-AM racing to the entire world."

More than 100 members of the international media reported on a field including drivers from 28 different countries and five continents. The race was covered and streamed live in the United States by SPEED and SPEED.com along with world-wide coverage from Motors TV. Motor Racing Network teamed with MotorRacingNetwork.com to expand its broadcast coverage to 18 hours, with the racing broadcast supplemented globally by Radio Le Mans.

The racing was outstanding – with both classes going right down to the final lap.

Ford scored an overall podium sweep reminiscent of its historic victory in the 1966 Rolex 24, while Porsche topped a record 44-car GT field that included nine manufacturers – including new exotics from Ferrari and Audi built specifically for Rolex Series competition.

Michael Shank Racing's new-generation Liveon.Com Ford/Riley prevailed in a battle that featured 49 lead changes among 22 drivers. NASCAR's AJ Allmendinger and IndyCar's Justin Wilson joining DP regulars Ozz Negri and John Pew in accepting the trophies and coveted Rolex Daytona Cosmographs after the race. Andy Lally, the 2011 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Sunoco Rookie of the Year, celebrated his return to the Rolex Series by joining Magnus Racing teammate John Potter, Richard Lietz and Rene Rast in prevailing in the GT class.

"GRAND-AM was truly in the international motorsports spotlight with the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24, and it was fantastic to see our new Daytona Prototypes and diverse GT field live up to the buildup with an outstanding event," Bledsoe said. "Now we look to continue to build on this momentum throughout the 2012 racing season."

The Rolex 24's star-studded history includes an A-List of celebrity drivers, including Paul Newman, Gene Hackman, Tim Allen, Jason Priestley, Craig T. Nelson and Bruce Jenner. Racing in the 50th Anniversary event

were actor Patrick Dempsey, making his fourth Rolex 24 start, and by AC/DC lead singer Brian Johnson. Other celebrities included singer/actress Reba McEntire, who watched her son, Shelby Blackstock, win the pole for Friday's BMW Performance 200. Garth Stein, author of "The Art of Racing in the Rain," mingled with both competitors and fans. Sir Jackie Stewart, a three-time Formula One World Champion, was a guest at the event and filled in for Grand Marshal A.J. Foyt, who was recovering from recent surgery.

Orianthi, former lead guitarist for the late Michael Jackson and Alice Cooper, joined blues guitarist Davey Knowles in a series of free concerts in the Sprint Fanzone throughout the weekend, one of many activities for the fans. Spectators got to race on the actual Daytona road circuit in Saturday morning's 5K run/walk, or they could get a bird's eye view of the racing action from the East Coast's tallest Ferris wheel in the infield carnival. A chili cook-off, wine and cheese party, slot car races, the Taste of the 24 and giant autograph session were among the other ways families could enjoy the weekend.

The Rolex 24 At Daytona also kicked off the inaugural North American Endurance Championship presented by VISITFLORIDA.com. This unique competition also showcases the Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen on July 1 at Watkins Glen International. It concludes with the Super Weekend at the Brickyard on July 27, GRAND-AM's first competition at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Next up on the 13-race GRAND-AM Rolex Series schedule will be the Porsche 250 on Saturday, March 31, at Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Ala. All Rolex Series races are televised on SPEED and Motors TV, and broadcast on the Motor Racing Network.

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Dr. Jim Lowe – Another Top 10 Finish at Daytona.

Provided by Jackie Buys / Motorsports Passion Media for JLow Racing

As Dr. Jim Lowe, the World's Fastest Neurosurgeon of Villanova PA, walked onto the starting grid for the 50th Anniversary celebration of the Grand-Am Rolex 24 at Daytona, the large enthusiastic crowd gathered for driver introduction barely left enough room for he and his teammates Brian & Burt Frisselle and Paul Tracy to walk alongside the 77 Doran Racing COMBOS Circle K Ford Dallara to their pit box. A total of 58 cars and teams made their way along the procession, each no doubt, feeling the same excitement to be competing in this historic event held at Daytona International Speedway on January 28-29, 2011. Brian Frisselle qualified the #77 Doran Racing COMBOS Circle K Ford Dallara P10 for the race on Saturday. The competition in the Prototype class was stiff with teams running new engines by Corvette and Ford, it was widely speculated that the Doran 'old-gen' Ford may not fair too well. While the car ran slow during the three-day official test, Roar before the 24, Lowe and the rest of the Doran team were confident the car would hold up just fine. With Champ Car Champion Paul Tracy joining the force on race weekend, they were now thought to be a 'potent' driver line-up.

One hour into the race, Brian Frisselle reported electrical issues which affected power delivery. The car was brought into the garage and within ten minutes, the problem was isolated and repaired. However fast that may seem, those ten minutes in the garage dropped them back 11 laps. "We had a rough start that made it an uphill climb for the rest of the race," commented Lowe. "It was a big struggle, but afterwards the engine worked great and ran beautifully. Everyone has worked real hard. The Frisselle brothers along with me and Paul Tracy were focused on regaining laps. Through a bit of attrition and good luck, we've moved up to 8th in the night and we are still there with four hours remaining in the race. The race has fewer cautions than we needed as these would give us the chance to move up. Another problem is the remaining cars in front of us are running like energizer bunnies. You hate to wish ill on anyone, but unless someone up front runs into trouble, we probably won't have the chance to finish any higher. But we are going to finish at top speed and bring it home with a top-10 finish to start the season. Considering the field we are driving in, that's a real accomplishment."

Lowe has always described driving at Daytona as "magical" and each year something is added to the experience. "In the seven years I've driven here, this is the first year I've been in the car for sunrise. It was beautiful. I have now seen sunset, sunrise, fog and a checker. The only thing I haven't driven in here is snow." Another part of the magic of Daytona is the ability to run with the greatest sports car drivers in the world. "It is still a privilege to drive with these guys and I have to laugh as I think, 'I've just been passed by Dario Franchitti and Juan Pablo Montoya'. To have the opportunity to race with your idols, even if they are passing you, it is still a cool thing."

As Lowe completes his seventh Rolex 24 and his second time running in the Daytona Prototype class, he still recognizes there is always more to learn. "I am not leaving here wishing I had driven more. My only disappointment was developing a huge welt on my back from the seat padding which prevented me from driving a double stint. But I felt more comfortable in traffic and did my fastest laps later in my stint. For me it's all about

seat time. When I was passed by Dalziel I followed him for a lap and went to school on what he was doing. I didn't stay with him because they have some speed on us, but it was great to be able and try and chase a guy like that and see what he's doing in turns. I do that with everybody who passes me. It's obvious they're doing something better than I'm doing it. But it's been a great learning experience. It's been a thrill. It's been a great weekend."

At hour 22, team owner Kevin Doran brought in young Ford driver Billy Johnson who had won Friday's Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge Series BMW Performance 200 driving the #61 Roush Performance Products/Gary Yeomans Ford Mustang with co-driver Jack Roush Jr. He drove flawlessly and brought the #77 Doran Racing COMBS Circle K Ford Dallara across the checker 7th in class. This win marks Lowes fourth Top 10 finish at Daytona. As Lowe commented, this was quite an accomplishment considering the field and yet only 3 of the 5 new Corvettes finished and the survivors had serious issues to overcome. Ford-powered Prototypes finished 1-2-3 at Daytona as #60 Michael Shank Racing Ford Riley with AJ Allmendinger finished 1st overall. Ryan Dalziel finished 2nd in the #8 StarWorks Motorsport Ford Riley and 3rd was the 'old-gen' #6 Michael Shank Racing Ford Riley.

Doran Racing with Frisselle brothers and Lowe now move on to the second meeting of the North American Endurance Championship at world famous Watkins Glen International for the Sahlen's Six Hours of the Glen on June 29 – July 1, 2011.

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Starworks' Sensational Second In The Rolex Provided by Starworks Media

THE PLOT: Starworks Motorsport produced a stunning second place in the 50th running of the Grand-Am Rolex Daytona 24. The Fort Lauderdale-based team turned up a sensational effort against the odds to make the second step of the podium in Florida. They finished just 5.1 seconds behind Michael Shank Racing. But they had been in the running for a magnificent win for most of the 24 hours.

After epic stints from Allan McNish and Venezuelans Enzo Potolicchio and Alex Popow, the team changed the strategy at the 22-hour mark. While their rivals kept their drivers in the car, Starworks put in Lucas Luhr so that Ryan Dalziel would be kept fresh for the final charge. He gave it everything, but eventually the team had to settle for second. The #2 car, with Ryan Hunter-Reay, Michael Valiante and Marco Andretti, finished in tenth place.

THE QUOTES: Team owner **Peter Baron**: "It is an immense bitter-sweet feeling. We got a car two weeks ago and it was almost a build up from scratch. The team did an awesome job, fielding two cars that ran perfectly. The #2 car had a driveshaft failure that wasn't their fault and the new car did not have one installation fault. It ran like clockwork.

"I have never been so confident midway through a race, thinking this is ours – but I guess it wasn't."

Ryan Dalziel, Orlando – originally from Lanarkshire in Scotland: "It is disappointing. I would be lying if I said I wasn't disappointed. We were the car to beat and it was nice to lead so many laps, but leading so many laps sometimes makes it feel worse when you don't take the checkered flag.

"On the plus side, it was an amazing race and the perfect way to mark the 50th running for Daytona. Starworks did an awesome job. Peter put together an amazing crew and we will now focus on the rest of the year."

Enzo Potolicchio, Venezuela: "We have all worked really hard since the end of last season. We hired the right people, so you can see how the team has grown. We are really proud of all the people Peter has put together. It is amazing how it has all come together. And I am delighted to have Ryan as a team-mate.

"Ryan is also my coach. Last year was our first year in DPs and we learned a lot about driving these difficult cars. But with all the work we have done in the off-season, we can show others now we are one of the teams to beat."

Alex Popow, Venezuela: "I did a good job. Enzo and I were doing good lap times. We can go out there and hang with the other guys, but we didn't have the experience to fight at the end and we didn't want to risk it. It is the 50th running of the Daytona 24 and we wanted to win.

"We have done such a good job – not just for this race, but since last year. It is a big turnaround for Starworks. We have a two-car team and that will last all season. We are going to fight for the championship. Last year we were rookies, this year we are saying we can try for the championship and we are going for it."

Lucas Luhr, Germany: "I really had to push hard in the final stint. I knew I was only doing a single stint because our strategy was to put Ryan in at the end against drivers who had been in a long time. The car was solid and I just pushed as hard as I could."

Allan McNish, Dumfries, Scotland: "It is never smooth in 24-hour racing. The important thing is to stay in there fighting and wait on it coming back to you. The car ran very well, without any mechanical issues. It has been fast. I never thought it would be fun because it is a job and these Daytona Prototype cars are so different from what I am used to.

"I said to Peter that he should be very proud of what he has put together and the performance of the whole team because I am proud of what he has put together. He has a shoestring budget compared with the Ganassis and the other big boys, so what he has done is quite sensational."

THE FACTS: Starworks Motorsport won the final round of the 2011 Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car championship at Mid-Ohio. Ryan Dalziel and Enzo Potolicchio were the drivers that day.

The next round is of the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series is at Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Alabama on March 31.

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No. 48 Chopard Porsche Shows Promise at Daytona Before Incident Race Ends Early for Miller, Maassen, Bell and Wilkins Provided by Paul Miller Racing Public Relations

Heading into last weekend's 50th Anniversary Daytona 24 Hours, the Paul Miller Racing No. 48 Chopard Porsche GT3 co-driven by Bryce Miller, Sascha Maassen, Rob Bell and Mark Wilkins rated as one of the top contenders for victory in a huge GT field.

Calling it "the best car I've ever had at Daytona," Miller topped the GT time charts for a goodly amount of the opening practice on Thursday before dropping to third at the end of the session in the pits as the track conditions improved. On Thursday afternoon, he put the car ninth on the GT starting grid.

The car was fast regardless of who was driving or what the conditions were. Bell turned in the second-quickest GT time during Thursday's night practice, and Maassen was quickest in a damp final practice session on Friday.

In the race, the team and drivers worked through a few early issues to remain in contention for the victory, and by the fourth hour, they were back among the top GT runners. The high point of the race was just after night fell, when Bell drove the No. 48 Porsche into the top five for the first time.

"We were really happy with the car going into the race," said team owner Paul Miller. "Surprisingly, we had a handling issue in Bryce's opening stint, but our engineer came up with a solution after feedback from Bryce and the car was corrected during a long yellow in Sascha's stint. We worked our way up to fifth place by 7 p.m. and we were running the leader's pace. It was clear we had a strong, contending car to battle for the win and the driver lineup to get the job done. Bryce, Sascha, Rob and Mark did an excellent job and our team rolled out a very good car for the race!"

Unfortunately, all the preparation in the world by the Paul Miller Racing team could not prevent two other cars from tangling with each other, which is what happened in Daytona's famed "bus stop" chicane early in the race's fifth hour just past 7:30 p.m. ET.

After the contact, one of those cars came back on course at the most inopportune time and hit Bell - who had gotten as high as fourth in the GT order - in the rear. The contact damaged the suspension on the No. 48 Chopard Porsche, sending it to the garage for an entire right rear corner, upright, trailing arm and axle.

The team ultimately got the car back on track, 30 laps behind the GT leader after spending just over an hour in the garage. It was clear that the team would not be able to get back into contention for the victory, and as this was the only GRAND-AM event the team plans to run in 2012, staying in the race for championship points was of little value. As a result, the team elected to retire from the race around midnight.

"It is unfortunate what happened to Rob," said Bryce Miller. "The guys put together a first class effort with the limited amount of time we had the car. The whole purpose of our effort was to go for the win. We aren't taking

points with us from here. Our championship commitment is elsewhere. The guys did a terrific job with the car, but sometimes things just happen in 24-hour races that you cannot control."

Prior to the car's retirement, however, Wilkins, an established road racer, was able to get his first taste of Paul Miller Racing in competition. Despite driving without a front splitter, which robbed the car of substantial downforce, he was able to post respectable laps in a double stint. He was definitely impressed with what he experienced.

"The Paul Miller Racing Porsche was fantastic," Wilkins said. "The guys did a great job to fix the rear suspension and get it back out there. It was a lot of fun. Not the outcome we came for, but a great experience. I want to thank the Paul Miller guys for working hard and doing a great job."

Although it was clearly a disappointing outcome, the team has much to look forward to in 2012.

"This was the best-prepared car I've ever had at Daytona, that's why it was such a blow," said Bryce Miller. "The car was flawless from a driver's standpoint, and I really appreciate it. We've still got so much to look forward to. The guys were all back in the shop Monday morning getting our RSR ready for Sebring."

Next up for Paul Miller Racing is the American Le Mans Series Winter Test at Sebring International Raceway on February 8-9. The 2012 ALMS season kicks off with the 60th Anniversary Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring presented by Fresh From Florida on Saturday, March 17.

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Davy Jones Race Report

Provided by Toni Calderon, Casus Management

Davy Jones completed a difficult 24 hour event during the 50th anniversary of the Rolex 24 at Daytona this weekend with the Godstone Ranch Motorsports team, finishing 26th in the GT class after a trouble-filled race in their #18 Texas Heart Institute Porsche GT3 Cup.

For Jones the 2012 season opener of the GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series was busy not only on track, but also throughout the week as he was part of the 50th anniversary of the event and participated in all of their past Champions events after winning the historic race in 1990.

The team took the green flag at the Daytona International Speedway after qualifying on the 32nd spot of the GT field and got off to a strong start with Mark Thomas behind the wheel slowly picking up positions. As Jones was last in the driver rotation, he waited patiently on the sidelines until Saturday night while teammates Bill Lester and John McCutchen completed their first stints of the race.

Only minutes before it was his turn to get in the car, the Muhlner Motorsports America operated team suffered its first set back after a contact in the bus stop which forced the car into the garage for repairs. This set the #18 Porsche GT3 many laps down and started what would be a series of setbacks. As soon as the team got their machine back out on track Jones got behind the wheel and completed a strong first of three stints during the grueling 24 race.

Overnight running was relatively uneventful as the Godstone Ranch Motorsports drivers went through their rotations and slowly worked themselves up the timing sheets. After Jones's third stint tragedy struck again when the Texas Heart Institute car's gearbox failed forcing the team once again to return to the garage for lengthy repairs and forcing them to lose more time.

After a successful repair by the team their #18 car managed to go back out on track and finish the around-the-clock event in the 26th position of the GT class. The car completed a total of 609 laps and 2168.04 miles at the famed high-banked speedway.

For up to minute updates follow Davy Jones at www.twitter.com/davyracing and for more information you can visit www.davyracing.com.

You can also text "CAR" to 50555 to donate \$10 to the Texas Heart Institute.

Davy Jones

Driver, #18 Texas Heart Institute / Godstone Motorsports Ranch / Porsche GT3 Cup

"It was definitely a tough race for us but the important thing is that we made it to the finish which is never easy in these events. We knew from the start that we were at a bit of a disadvantage because we didn't have the

chance to test at the Roar Before the 24 so we had a steep learning curve coming into the weekend. But everybody did a great job both during practice sessions and qualifying, and also during the race. But things don't always go your way and unfortunately we had some mechanical problems and damage that kept us from being able to fight for a top spot.

"For me it was a very special weekend because I got to be a part of the Past Champions celebrations and got to relive a lot of memories and see old friends. Now we'll focus on putting together our plans for the rest of the season and working hard for next year so we can add another Rolex 24 win to our resume."

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Brumos Racing Sets the Stage for 2012 with Rolex 24 Podium Finish

Provided by Patti Tantillo for Brumos Racing

With countless hours of hard work and preparation behind them, Brumos Racing was happy to get back on track at the 2012 season-opener Rolex 24 at Daytona. With momentum of the 2011 Championship behind them, the drivers and crew were confident of their ability to deliver a strong performance and hopeful of delivering a Rolex 24 win as well. The challenges were many, with one of the largest and most competitive fields in Rolex 24 history. Although the hoped-for win proved elusive, Brumos delivered a dominant performance, with the #59 leading the race for 281 laps before ending on the podium with a 3rd place finish.

Andrew Davis faced the daunting task of qualifying the Brumos Porsche 911 GT3 in the 45-car GT field. The crew's hard work put him at the front of the line as the session began, and he delivered, capturing pole position for the #59. Davis described the race as a grueling event, adding, "This is the first of my eleven Rolex 24 starts where I can say we had a flawless run. There was no time spent in the garage, behind the pit wall, in a tire wall, or in the penalty box. At the end, we struggled with a power steering issue and a misfire so unfortunately we weren't able to challenge for the win after leading so much of the race. I am so proud of the Brumos crew and appreciate all of the support we receive from the entire Brumos organization."

Leh Keen also gave high marks to his crew. "We had a stellar performance and raced for the win the entire 24 hours," he said. "Our podium finish gives us a great start to defend our championship for 2012, and such a strong run throughout the race also helped us in the Endurance Championship. This was personally my best finish at a Rolex 24 and I am very proud of that. It was really special to share the podium with Hurley Haywood on his final Rolex 24 race. All in all, any time you leave a race soaked in champagne, you have had a good day. I can't wait for the rest of this season and the chance to show everyone what Brumos can do."

It was fitting that Hurley Haywood ended his 40th Rolex 24 back on the podium, but he was already focused on season ahead. "This was such a hard race," he said. "We were lucky to have a good car underneath us, and our guys did a great job of driving it. All in all, we ran a trouble-free race until the end. Marc was doing a Herculean job of driving, never knowing from corner to corner if he was going to have power steering or not. But our performance at this race has painted the picture – it has shown our competitors that we are going to be the team to beat in 2012."

Marc Lieb's performance in the closing stint was applauded by his teammates, as his efforts kept the #59 on the podium despite the challenges. Lieb joined his co-drivers with praise for the crew, saying, "It was an amazing effort, the car was fantastic and the crew did an awesome job with the pit stops. Leh and Andrew were perfect and then we had Hurley doing his 40th race, getting in the car when he didn't drive much in practice, but doing an awesome job. I can see it's going to be really difficult this year in the Rolex Series GT class with this level of competition, but Leh and Andrew have the ability and they can do it. I'm sure it's going to be a great 2012 for Brumos."

For Dan Davis, the podium represented a new milestone for the Brumos GT effort. Davis said, "Brumos accomplished something this week that we have strived for a long time, and that is to finish on the podium at the 24 hours. We were fortunate enough to do that in our DP car and now we are on the podium again for the 50th anniversary of the Rolex 24. We were also on the GT pole, which I think is a tremendous salute to our team and our drivers. Our strategy didn't work out quite as we had planned, but a 3rd place finish in this race is something to be really proud of. I thank all our folks for their hard work and dedication to what we're trying to do - that is, to win races. I thank everyone at all of our Brumos dealerships, too, for all that they do to enable us to continue to go racing."

The Rolex 24 at Daytona finish puts Brumos in 3rd place in team points standings, and in 2nd place in the North American Endurance Championship, just one point shy of the lead. Following the post Rolex 24 break, Brumos is back in action on March 31st in the Porsche 250 at Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Alabama.

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Riley Technologies DPG3 Dominates Daytona With 8th Consecutive Win

Moves past Porsche record with consecutive chassis wins

You only get one chance to make a first impression, and the all-new Riley Technologies MK XXVI DPG3 nailed it this weekend by dominating the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona.

Michael Shank Racing with Curb/Agajanian led a Riley sweep of the podium as John Pew, Ozz Negri, AJ Allmendinger, and Justin Wilson took Riley to its eighth consecutive Rolex 24 victory.

A name that is already synonymous with victory, the win further solidified the Riley reputation as Riley Technologies broke Porsche's record for consecutive chassis victories.

Fighting the team all the way to the finish was the No. 8 Starworks Motorsport entry of Ryan Dalziel, Lucas Luhr, Allan McNish, Enzo Potolicchio, and Alex Popow. A spirited battle for the lead between McNish and Allmendinger with over two hours remaining in the race saw the duo making side to side contact at full speed on the oval, with both Riley entries continuing to the finish unscathed.

Completing the Riley Tech podium sweep was the No. 6 Michael Shank Racing with Curb/Agajanian Ford-powered entry. The second-generation DP design, driven by the youngest line of of racers in the event with Michael McDowell, Felipe Nasr, Gustavo Yacaman, and Jorge Goncalvez, finished less than one minute behind the winning entry of the sister Mike Shank machine. The No. 6 had been the highest qualifier of the previous generation designs.

The weekend opened with the No. 8 Starworks Motorsport Riley scoring the pole in qualifying and the Riley machines were once again the class of the field, leading 711 of a new DP-era record 761 laps with a total of 22 different drivers leading the race. The victory also marked the 11th Rolex 24 At Daytona overall race victory for a Riley-designed machine in the last 17 years, with Riley-penned machines also having numerous class victories to the firm's credit.

In addition to sweeping the top six positions overall, Riley Technologies also showed well in the 44-car GT class field scoring two top-10 results with the No.70 SpeedSource Mazda RX-8 of James Hinchcliffe, Sylvain Tremblay, Jonathan Bomarito and Marino Franchitti finishing the race in sixth and the No. 40 Dempsey Racing Mazda RX-8 of Joe Foster, Patrick Dempsey, Tom Long, Charles Espenlaub and Charles Putman finishing 10th.

Adding to the impressive weekend outing was the fact that the final Riley DPG3 design was not approved by GRAND-AM until late in the off-season, creating a narrow timetable to have everything completed. By making the most of the vendor partners and team relationships that Riley Technologies enjoys, a tremendous group effort brought the ultimate reward with the big race finish.

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"This 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 was a huge event, so to introduce a new design and have it finish 1-2 in its very first race is outstanding," said Riley Technologies Vice President Bill Riley. "We had a late start on this project and our shop and our composite vendors have worked non-stop for the last two months preparing for this race. The teams did not have all of their parts in hand until they were at the track in Daytona. Having a team run a second-generation DP right to the podium was also very cool. Congrats to Mike Shank and his entire group for just an incredible performance, all weekend long-- a great accomplishment after a lot of hard work. Everyone had such high expectations for this race, and I think that the quality of the racing was some of the best we've seen. We are very excited about the 2012 GRAND-AM season, and this was the best way possible to kick it off."

2011 marked Riley's eighth consecutive Manufacturer Championship, and Riley's DP designs have 85 wins to their credit, including eight consecutive Rolex 24 At Daytona victories.

The firm will look for continued success in Daytona Prototype, Rolex GT and Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge competition as GRAND-AM next heads to Barber Motorsports Park March 30-31.

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SpeedSource Team Report

Speedsource Sixth Place Finish @ Daytona 24

Provided by Wayne Nonnamaker for SpeedSource

This year marked the 50th anniversary of the historic Rolex 24 Hours of Daytona. This twice-around-the-clock spectacle attracts dozens of the finest teams and drivers in all of international motorsports. With a strong endurance racing pedigree, the SpeedSource team arrived in Daytona prepared and ready-to-race. Regular-season drivers Sylvain Tremblay and Jonathan Bomarito were joined by racing superstars Marino Franchitti and James Hinchcliffe in the #70 Mazdaspeed RX-8.

A flawlessly executed race plan led to a strong Sixth Place finish in GT. The SpeedSource car was able to improve 18 spots from the initial starting position of 24th; one of the best improvements of the entire race field and the highest finishing Mazda. As has become typical of the Coral Springs, FL-based team, the SpeedSource advantage came through great race strategy and flawless pit stops. In total, the crew performed 34 scheduled pit stops that included: 24 tire changes, 29 full fuel fills, 5 partial fuel fills, 16 driver changes, and installing fresh brake pads. Even with the sheer quantity of scheduled service, the team spent an unprecedentedly low total stopped time of only 19 minutes and 43 seconds!

It was instilled from pre-race strategy meetings that the key to a strong finish was going to come from flawless execution both on-track and in the pit lane. All four drivers drove error-free stints, often times double stinting for 90 minute sessions. However, despite the effort, the straight-line speed of the leading German cars was too much to compete with; the #70 Mazdaspeed RX-8 fell a lap down for every two hours of green-flag running. The nimble Mazda RX-8 was able to keep strong pace through the Daytona infield but, once on the banking, top speed differential to other engines over twice the size of the 20B 3-Rotor did not provide a level playing field. In total, the 6th place finish came 5 laps down to the GT class leader.

"I have never had the pleasure of driving a better prepped racecar," recalled Tremblay after the race. "The guys did an amazing job calling a great race, unfortunately the parity is too great between cars right now and the finish position does not showcase the amazing team effort."

"That was an amazing performance for 24 hours and was a perfect example of everyone doing their respective jobs perfectly," exclaimed Bomarito about the blistering pit stops.

The GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series will take a two month hiatus as many teams will elect to rebuild their racecars. Round two of the 2012 season will take teams to Barber Motorsports Park just outside of Birmingham, AL the last weekend of March.

Metrics:

- Improved 18 positions in class
- 722 laps for 2570 miles
- 18,772 gear shifts
- 10,140,000 engine revolutions
- 34 pit stops for 578 gallons of fuel and 104 tires

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No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports Camaro Is First Chevrolet GT To Cross Line at the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 Hours At Daytona

After 24 hours Stevenson Team finishes a close fourth behind Daytona-friendly Porsche parade. Sister car, No. 75 Camaro drops out with transmission failure with 21 hours completed

On a weekend dedicated to remembering 50 years of memorable racing action at Daytona International Speedway, America's 'World Center of Racing', one American race team created an all new memory of their own with a very strong finish in a race that saw new rules and favorable conditions for the competition play a role in the outcome. After 24 hours of running a nearly flawless race – and at a pace akin to a sprint race - the No. 57 Stevenson Motorsports Chevrolet Camaro crossed the finish line in fourth place in the GT class, the teams highest ever finish in this American classic event, the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 Hours at Daytona, the opening race of the 2012 GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series season.

The efforts of drivers Robin Liddell, John Edwards and Ronnie Bremer worked in perfect harmony with Team Manager Mike Johnson and Crew Chief Mike Hoffman's strategy and preparation. Despite having to carry added weight in the Camaro, and not withstanding a speed differential to the advantage of the Porsche cars that finished 1-2-3, the Stevenson team performed flawlessly and came away feeling a great sense of accomplishment.

Team Manager Mike Johnson: "I always tell the crew before the race that things will go wrong and the team that handles the problems most efficiently will win the race. We prepare for every situation before we get there and have plans for all scenarios. This year, we didn't have to use a single one as the team and car ran at 100% for 24 straight hours. We never had a pit stop that lasted longer than the time needed to add fuel - other than stops to make brake changes. The car held together throughout the day and night and the only thing that fell off the car was a driver helmet blower hose. Michael Hoffman and his guys put together one of the best prepared cars to ever go to Daytona, but unfortunately, so did three other Porsche teams and we finished fourth."

Team Owner John Stevenson expressed his admiration for his team's diligent approach to preparing for this grueling event, delivering an outcome that positions them for a season that holds much promise for a run at the championship.

"I am extremely elated and proud of our entire team." Stevenson said, "Michael Hoffman, our Crew Chief, led us to Daytona with the team prepared for this race better than we have ever been. The No. 57 Camaro GT.R performed flawlessly all weekend as did our great pit crew. We had what were consistently the best pit stops for a 24 hour race in our history. The drivers, Robin Liddell, John Edwards and Ronnie Bremer, were robotic. Our Engineer, Ben Johnson, was an obvious key to our successful weekend and Mike Johnson led our organization through a near perfect 24 hours. His calls from the box and his strategy are exceeded by no one. Our race results, however, as good as they were, were tainted by the poor officiating for this event."

Johnson too felt the management of this race by Grand-Am suffered from the introduction of a new rule regarding wave-bys during caution periods.

Johnson: "From our standpoint the race was an absolute success even though we were not on the podium and it feels great going into the rest of the season near the top of the points chart. However this race was not without issues as Grand-Am was trying a new wave by procedure that they did not truly understand and on three separate occasions, we went from the lead of the race to being placed one lap down. It was horribly frustrating for all teams since it felt like we were working at times without a rule book. Saying all that, the team and drivers persevered and fought all the way to the end taking 4th place away from the Risi Ferrari."

Robin Liddell will contest the entire 2102 Rolex season with co-drive John Edwards in the No. 57 Camaro. He had a special moment before the race when he was asked to pose for photographs with the rest of the drivers who hailed from Scotland all standing alongside none other than Scotland's most famous racing driver, Jackie Stewart. This 50th Anniversary event was indeed a special moment in time and one Liddell will not readily forget.

Liddell: "The atmosphere for this special event was fantastic and the quality of the field of cars and drivers meant it was always going to be a tough challenge. I thought the race went very well from a Stevenson Motorsports standpoint; the preparation of the car was superb and the guys did a first class job in the pits. In that respect, it was the best performance by the Camaro and the team at Daytona. It was just a little frustrating that Porsche were allowed to run away with it and frankly although we ran fast and consistently throughout the race, we didn't have the speed we needed to get on terms with the Porsche. That being said, it was a good start to the championship and our best to date.

"I hope this is the start of a great year, Liddell continued, "that puts the Chevy Camaro on top with the best team in GT! Many thanks again to Johnny and Susan for their commitment and to all the guys for their efforts both in the run up to and during the race."

John Edwards will be doing double duty on the Stevenson team in 2012 with a season long ride in both the Rolex Series with Liddell in the No. 57 GT.R and the Continental Tire Challenge with Matt Bell in the No. 9 GS.R.

Edwards: ""After 24 hours of racing, fourth place can seem a little frustrating as we are the first to not spray champagne, but the entire Stevenson team can be proud of our preparation and performance during this difficult race. The car had no issues and the crew executed every pit stop perfectly, and we finished on the lead lap. Unfortunately, we just did not have the speed of the Porsches on the straightaway, so we knew we were not going to pass them if they had no issues that brought them to pit lane.

"Fourth place after a grueling 24 hours is a great start to the overall championship as well as the endurance championship, especially as the site of the next endurance round at Watkins Glen is a place that the Camaro should excel. I'm looking forward to a strong season with Robin in the No. 57 Stevenson Camaro."

For this race the team entered the Camaro chassis that had been rebuilt after the horrendous crash at Watkins Glen last season. This chassis had been run previously by the team as a Pontiac but was converted to the Camaro body prior to the start of the 2010 season. The No. 75 Chevrolet Camaro was piloted by Matt Bell, Eric Curran, Al Carter and Hugh Plumb and it will make additional appearances this season at the three events that make up the new North American Endurance Championship.

Unfortunately, the No. 75 Camaro did not complete the full 24 hours as transmission troubles put the car out with just three hours left to run.

Johnson: "The No. 75 Camaro did not have the same success as the No. 57, but they still put in an excellent race. Two random and early half-shaft failures caused the car to go multiple laps down early into the event and then with about four hours to go, the side blew out of the gearbox."

Hugh Plumb: "First off I want to say thank you to the entire Stevenson Motorsports team and to Pratt and Miller and Kyle Milay and especially Mike Johnson and John and Susan Stevenson for a great opportunity to run in the 50th Rolex 24 Hours at Daytona. At the beginning of the race we showed good pace but unfortunately our mechanical issues put us back. We were able to claw our way back through the field only to have another half-shaft let go. Through the night we had been able to make up lots of positions moving up to around 27th place by Sunday morning. At that point it looked as if we could finish strong but with three hours to go the gearbox let go and that was the end of our race. While it was extremely unfortunate that we did not do better, my co-drivers Al

Carter, Eric Curran and Matt Bell did an amazing job doing what they had to do to keep the car out of trouble. I would love an opportunity to run with them and this team again!"

Eric Curran joined the team for this race, taking a break from his normal role as a driver in the No. 31 Whelen Corvette as that car was not entered in this race. He enjoyed the experience of working with this team he normally competes against but this time he wasn't happy the Stevenson Team did not finish well.

"Overall I had a great weekend with the Stevenson Team." Curran noted. "It didn't end as we all had hoped but it wasn't for a lack of trying. I had a great qualifying stint in the No.75 Stevenson Camaro, ending up in the 13th spot out of 42. Normally I wouldn't be happy with 13th, but in this tough field that wasn't so bad. And being the second Camaro at the front didn't hurt either.

"I started the race on Saturday and things were going really well. We ran inside the top 10 for a first few hours. Matt Bell then jumped in for a few stints and not long after we broke our first half-shaft. Repairs set us back 15 laps and marked the beginning of our down turn. A few hours later we broke another half-shaft. It isn't clear why this happened but the damage set us back a number of laps.

"I did four two-hours stints in the car and I had a good time. There are always a few close calls especially at night but we hardly put a mark on the car. We continued to charge hard and made it to the 21 hour mark until the transmission finally gave up. I wish our luck had gone a different route but that's racing. All the guys who worked on the No. 75 worked hard to keep us going all weekend.

"I want to say thanks to John Stevenson, Michael Johnson, the Crew and the guys at Chevy for helping to make this all happen. This was such a big event with massive attendance. I was happy to be a part of it. Guardian Angel and The Starlight foundation brought some wonderful kids by our paddock and I really enjoyed spending time with them before the race."

The Rolex 24 hours at Daytona was not the end of the road for the No. 75 Camaro. GRAND-AM recently announced a new North American Endurance Championship for 2012. The inaugural championship features the 50th anniversary running of the Rolex 24 at Daytona along with the Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen at Watkins Glen International on June 29-July 1 and the Rolex Series' three-hour debut race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway on July 27. Car No. 75 will return to compete in that championship once it has been returned to race ready condition.

Johnson: "We look forward to getting the car back together as it will return to the series for Indy and the 6 Hours of the Glen as part of the North American Endurance Championship."

While not coming away with a win in race one, John Stevenson is very optimistic his team's great first effort will set the tone for a solid run at the Drivers and Manufacturer's Championships in 2012.

Stevenson: "After the great run here at Daytona, I am really looking forward to the rest of our 2012 season."

The next race on the 2012 GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series schedule will take place on April 1st at Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Alabama.

More information about the Stevenson Motorsports team, and the Stevenson performance shop, can be found on Facebook

For more information on the Grand-Am Rolex Series, go to www.grand-am.com/rolex

Stevenson Motorsports operates out of a facility located in Jacksonville, North Carolina.

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